P 4

SIX CONFERRENCES

Concerning

The Eucharist.

Novemb. 5. 1678.

MR. *A. Pulton* Jesuit, having in his Remarks (published *Novemb.* 4.) declared (in effect Vin. p. 29, 30.) that the Principles of Philosophy which contradict the Doctrine of Transubstantiation are to be renounc'd, and that Christians have the same ground to believe Transubstantiation as the Blessed Trinity, and demanding *How great the Confusion of Dr.* T. *will be at the Day of Judgment, when he shall find that Tenet true:* The said Dr. *Tenison* the Publisher of THIS BOOK, does, so far as concerns these Particulars, refer Mr. *Pulton* to *M.*, and for the rest of his Remarks he will in due time give a very just Answer to them.

Books lately printed for Richard Chiſwell.

A Diſſertation concerning the Government of the *Ancient Church*: more particularly of the Encroachments of the *Biſhops of Rome* upon other *Sees*. By *WILLIAM CAVE*, D. D. *Octavo*.

An Anſwer to Mr. *Serjeant*'s [Sure Footing in Chriſtianity] concerning the Rule of Faith: With ſome other Diſcourſes. By *WILLIAM FALKNER*, D. B. 4*o*.

A Vindication of the Ordinations of the *Church of England*; in Anſwer to a Paper written by one of the *Church of Rome*, to prove the Nullity of our Orders. By *GILBERT BURNET*, D. D. *Octavo*.

An Abridgment of the Hiſtory of the Reformation of the *Church of England*. By *GILB. BURNET*, D. D. *Octavo*.

The APOLOGY of the *Church of England*; and an Epiſtle to one Signior *Scipio*, a *Venetian* Gentleman, concerning the Council of *Trent*. Written both in Latin, by the Right Reverend Father in God, *JOHN JEWEL* Lord Biſhop of *Sarisbury*: Made Engliſh by a Perſon of Quality. To which is added, The Life of the ſaid Biſhop: Collected and written by the ſame Hand. *Octavo*.

The Life of *WILLIAM BEDEL*, D. D. Biſhop of *Kilmore* in *Ireland*. Together with *Certain Letters* which paſſed betwixt him and *James Waddeſworth* (a late Penſioner of the Holy Inquiſition of *Sevil*) in Matter of Religion, concerning the General Motives to the *Roman Obedience*. *Octavo*.

The Decree made at *ROME* the Second of *March*, 1679. condemning ſome Opinions of the *Jeſuits*, and other *Caſuiſts*. *Quarto*.

A Diſcourſe concerning the Neceſſity of Reformation, with reſpect to the Errors and Corruptions of the *Church of Rome*. *Quarto*. Firſt and Second Parts.

A Diſcourſe concerning the Celebration of Divine Service in an Unknown Tongue. *Quarto*.

A Papiſt not Miſrepreſented by Proteſtants. Being a Reply to the Reflections upon the Anſwer to [A Papiſt Miſrepreſented and Repreſented]. *Quarto*.

An Expoſition of the Doctrine of the *Church of England*, in the ſeveral Articles propoſed by the late BISHOP of *CONDOM*, [in his Expoſition of the Doctrine of the *Catholick Church*]. *Quarto*.

A Defence of the Expoſition of the Doctrine of the *Church of England*; againſt the Exceptions of Monſieur de *Meaux*, late Biſhop of *Condom*, and his Vindicator. 4*o*.

A *CATECHISM* explaining the Doctrine and Practices of the *Church of Rome*. With an Anſwer thereunto. By a *Proteſtant* of the *Church of England*. 8*o*.

A Papiſt Repreſented and not Miſrepreſented, being an Anſwer to the Firſt, Second, Fifth and Sixth Sheets of the Second Part of the [Papiſt Miſrepreſented and Repreſented]; and for a further Vindication of the *CATECHISM*, truly repreſenting the Doctrines and Practices of the *Church of Rome*. *Quarto*.

The *Lay-Chriſtian*'s Obligation to read the Holy Scriptures. *Quarto*.

The *Plain Man*'s Reply to the *Catholick Miſſionaries*. 24*o*.

An Anſwer to *THREE PAPERS* lately printed, concerning the Authority of the *Catholick Church* in Matters of Faith, and the Reformation of the *Church of England*. *Quarto*.

A Vindication of the Anſwer to THREE PAPERS concerning the Unity and Authority of the *Catholick Church*, and the Reformation of the *Church of England*. *Quarto*.

BOOKS lately Printed for *Richard Chiſwell.*

THE Pillar and Ground of Truth. A Treatiſe ſhewing that the *Roman Church* falſly claims to be *That Church*, and the Pillar of *That Truth* mentioned by S. *Paul*, in his firſt Epiſtle to *Timothy*, *Chap.* 3. *Verſ.* 15. 4°.

The Peoples Right to read the Holy Scripture Aſſerted. 4°.

A Short Summary of the principal Controverſies between the Church of *England* and the Church of *Rome*; being a Vindication of ſeveral Proteſtant Doctrines, in Anſwer to a Late Pamphlet, Intituled, [*Proteſtancy deſtitute of Scripture Proofs.*] 4°.

Two Diſcourſes; Of Purgatory, and Prayers for the Dead.

An Anſwer to a Late Pamphlet, Intituled, [The Judgment and Doctrine of the Clergy of the Church of *England* concerning one Special Branch of the King's Prerogative, viz. *In diſpenſing with the Penal Laws.*] 4°.

The *Notes* of the *Church*, as laid down by Cardinal *Bellarmin*, examined and confuted. 4°.

Preparation for Death: Being a Letter ſent to a young Gentlewoman in *France*, in a dangerous Diſtemper of which ſhe died.

The Difference between the *Church of England* and the *Church of Rome*, in oppoſition to a late Book, Intituled, *An Agreement between the Church of* England *and Church of* Rome.

A *PRIVATE PRAYER* to be uſed in Difficult Times.

A True Account of a Conference held about Religion at *London*, *Sept.* 29, 1687, between *A. Pulton*, Jeſuit, and *Tho. Tenniſon*, D. D. as alſo of that which led to it, and followed after it. 4°.

The Vindication of *A. Creſſener*, Schoolmaſter in *Long-Acre*, from the Aſperſions of *A. Pulton*, Jeſuit, Schoolmaſter in the *Savoy*, together with ſome Account of his Diſcourſe with Mr. *Meredith*.

A Diſcourſe ſhewing that Proteſtants are on the ſafer Side, notwithſtanding the uncharitable Judgment of their Adverſaries; and that *Their Religion* is the ſureſt Way to Heaven. 4°.

Six Conferences concerning the *Euchariſt*, wherein is ſhewed, that the Doctrine of *Tranſubſtantiation* overthrows the Proofs of Chriſtian Religion.

A Diſcourſe concerning the pretended Sacrament of *Extreme Unction*; with an account of the Occaſions and Beginnings of it in the Weſtern Church. In Three Parts. With a Letter to the Vindicator of the Biſhop of *Condom*.

SIX

CONFERENCES

CONCERNING

The Eucharist.

Wherein is shewed,

That the Doctrine of *Transubstantiation* overthrows the Proofs of *Christian Religion.*

Imprimatur.

Septemb. 12. 1687.

Jo. Battely.

LONDON:

Printed for **Richard Chiswell,** at the Rose and Crown in St. *Paul's* Church-yard, MDCLXXXVII.

The CONTENTS
Of the *Six Conferences* concerning the EUCHARIST.

CONFERENCE I.

THE First Proof, That Tranſubſtantiation abſolutely deſtroys the certainty of our Senſes, which is the Foundation of the ſtrongeſt Proofs of Chriſtianity.

CONF. II.

The Second Proof, That Tranſubſtantiation diſcrediting the Teſtimony of our Senſes, does abſolutely overthrow the principal Reaſons which confirm the Truth of Chriſtian Religion.

CONF. III.

Wherein are confirmed the two Proofs contained in the two preceding Diſcourſes.

CONF. IV.

The Third Proof, That Tranſubſtantiation eſtabliſhes Scepticiſm in its full perfection; and eſpecially deſtroys the certainty of Demonſtration.

CONF. V.

Wherein is finally ſhew'd, That Tranſubſtantiation eſtabliſhes Scepticiſm; and abſolutely deſtroys the certainty of Firſt Principles.

CONF. VI.

Wherein the Proofs contained in the foregoing Diſcourſes are defended; and the impoſſibility of uſing them againſt the Doctrine of the Trinity is demonſtrated.

SIX CONFERENCES Concerning the EUCHARIST.

CONFERENCE I.

That Tranſubſtantiation abſolutely deſtroys the certainty of our Senſes, which is the Foundation of the ſtrongeſt Proofs of Chriſtianity.

IT's not many days ſince I came to Mr. *N.* and found him in his Study, having his Eyes fix'd on a Book; with the reading of which he ſeem'd to be ſo taken up, as made me think I ſhould do him wrong to interrupt him. Intending therefore to withdraw, without his ſeeing me; I could not do it without ſome ſmall diſturbance, which made him turn his Head towards the place where I was, and haſtily ariſe towards me.

You ſhall not be gone, ſaid he, for I prize your Company at another rate than thus to loſe it. The loſs, repli'd I, would rather be mine; and I am afraid leſt I ſhould deprive you of the pleaſure of ſome delightful

delightful reading, as knowing, by experience, how vexatious it is to be disturb'd at such a time.

What you say, answered he (after he had made me sit down) is very true. I am not a little pleas'd with reading good Books, and I doubt not, but this which lies before me is of that number. But you have wherewith to make me amends for this Interruption, for I doubt not, but before we part, you will increase the Pleasure which this reading afforded me; and approving this Book, as I dare say you will, you'l not a little confirm me in the good Opinion I have of it; and make me read it henceforward with greater earnestness.

Your esteem of the Book, repli'd I, is enough to gain my approbation. I am not wont to make Appeals from your Judgment, having been always so pleas'd in following it, that 'tis now become a kind of Law, which I never violate. But perhaps I never saw this Book.

That can't be, answer'd he, this Book has been too famous for you not to see it, especially considering it's some Years since 'twas publish'd. In a word, 'tis the Book which the Ingenious Mr. *Huet* has written to establish the Truth of Christian Religion *(a)*.

(a) P. Dan. Huetii demonstratio Evangelica.

I do not repent, said I, of my engagement to approve of it, for I have read it with great delight, not to mention the Style, which is delicate, and want's no Ornaments; I find it repleniſh'd with judicious Observations, and such as lie out of the common Road, full of great sense and plainness. In short, 'tis a Work worthy its Author, who hold's a considerable Place amongst Learned Men.

I have only one thing to say against the Book, and that with regret, because I know you will not herein agree with me. Let's hear it however, said he; It is;

repli'd

repli'd I, That this Book was made by one of your Party. If that be all the fault, anſwer'd he, I am much miſtaken if Mr. *Huet* ever corrects it.

You may judg what you pleaſe of it, replied I; my Opinion is, That this is a capital Fault, and ſpoil's the whole Work. For whereas this would have been an excellent Piece, had it been wrote by a *Proteſtant*; coming from a Perſon of your Communion, it loſes all its Force and Conviction, and overthrows its own Arguments; and ſhould it fall into the hands of a knowing Infidel, he could, with one word anſwer it.

This is very ſurpriſing, ſays Mr. *N.* and you muſt be a very great Bigot in your Religion, to offer ſuch a ſtrange and incredible Paradox. Has your Belief the priviledg of making bad Arguments good Ones? and is ours ſo unhappy as to corrupt the beſt Things, and change Demonſtrations into Sophiſms, as oft as they paſs through our hands?

There may be, repli'd I, ſome Truth in what you now ſay; and I give an Inſtance of this from one of your *Authors* (*b*); who ſhews, That the greateſt part of *Seneca*'s Maxims are falſe and ridiculous in the Writings of That *Philoſopher*; whereas they would be very proper and excellent in the Writings of a *Chriſtian*.

(*b*) *Education of a Prince.*

The ſame may I ſay of Mr. *Huet*, and the reſt of your *Authors*, who undertake this Subject. The beſt Proofs become *Paralogiſms* in their Writings; and 'tis by paſſing over into ours, that they reſume their ſtrength and due efficacy.

And this is one of the Effects which your *Tranſubſtantiation* operates, deſtroying the moſt convincing Arguments you can offer the Infidels, and giving them

an

an infallible means to defend themſelves, and right to maintain, That if theſe Proofs be good, *Tranſubſtantiation* is not a part of the *Chriſtian Religion*; or if *Tranſubſtantiation* be a part of the *Chriſtian Religion*, theſe Proofs be of no validity.

It's certain, if they be Men endued with ſenſe, they will lay hold of the firſt of theſe Propoſitions. In effect it's apparent, That Mr. *Huet*'s Proofs are valid, and good in themſelves; whereas 'tis not certain, That Tranſubſtantiation is one of the Doctrines which Chriſtianity teaches, not to ſay that it ought to be taken for granted, that it is not one of them. It is ſo ſtrange and offenſive, and ſo little agrees with the whole Body of reveal'd Truths; either in general, or particular, that a Man needs only the uſe of his Senſes, free from all prejudices, to perceive, That this comes not from the ſame Spring, and that *the Author of Chriſtianity is a very different Perſon from the Author of Tranſubſtantiation.*

Such Infidels then, that are diſcerning Men, will ſeparate what's offered to them jointly. They will embrace *Chriſtianity*, and reject *Tranſubſtantiation*: They will receive this Holy *Religion*, as coming from the Spirit of God, and put from them your Doctrine as a *humane Invention.*

However 'tis not long of you, That they caſt not themſelves into the other aforementioned extremity: I mean, the perſuading themſelves that the Proofs of the Chriſtian Religion be invalid. Yet you are for perſuading them, not only That Tranſubſtantiation is one of the Doctrines which the Goſpel teaches, but moreover one of its principal ones; one of the moſt eſſential Points of Chriſtian Religion, and that which can be leaſt ſpared. And conſequently, if theſe Infi-

dels

dels be ſimple enough to believe this, and after ſuch an Error have any reaſon left, they will only make uſe of it to perſwade themſelves, That that Religion which teaches ſuch an incredible Doctrine, could not have been revealed by the Spirit of Truth; and that the Proofs which were made uſe of to eſtabliſh the *Divinity* of it, are of no validity.

I am ſo ſtrongly poſſeſſed with the belief of *Tranſubſtantiation*, (ſaid Mr. *N.*) That I believe no Objections in the World are capable to make me doubt one minute of the truth of it. Yet I muſt acknowledg, 'twould be a terrible Temptation to me, could you convince me of what you ſay. It does ſo highly concern us, That the Proofs of Chriſtianity be valid, That there are few Things but what ought to be ſacrific'd to ſo great an Intereſt; and I know no greater prejudice againſt a Doctrine, than to ſhew that it weakens theſe Proofs, and gives advantage to ſuch dangerous Adverſaries, as thoſe are, againſt whom we uſe them. And therefore I muſt ingenuouſly confeſs to you, That you cannot touch me in a more tender place. But I muſt affirm at the ſame time, you have undertaken what you will never be able to prove: That Tranſubſtantiation overthrows the Arguments of Mr. *Huet*, even thoſe which ſeem moſt likely to convert Unbelievers.

I do not doubt, replied I, but to make it plain to you; and I am willing you ſhould make no account of my Arguments, if you your ſelf do not find they carry along with them the cleareſt Evidence. But if you pleaſe, let me hear firſt, which are the Arguments Mr. *Huet* has made uſe of, for thoſe are they which be in queſtion between us.

The Proofs, ſaid he, are certain undeniable hiſtorical Matters of Fact; and which are moreover of ſuch a nature, That they cannot be true, if Chriſtian Religion be not of God; and the Matters of Fact be theſe, That long before our Saviour's Time, the *Jews* had certain Books which they eſteem'd *Sacred*, and which they believed were written by Men inſpired of God. That theſe Books have come down to us without alteration; and that we have them, ſuch as they were before our Lord's Incarnation. That they contain divers Prophecies, which promiſe a *Deliverer* to the *Jewiſh* Nation; whom they mention under the name of *Meſſias*, diſtinctly denoting his *Birth*, his Actions, his Death, and Reſurrection; and in general, the moſt remarkable Paſſages of his Life. That under the Empire of *Tiberius*, there appeared in *Judea* a Man called *Jeſus*, who ſaid he was this *Meſſias*. That there was ſeen in his Perſon whatever the Writings of the Prophets had foretold ſhould be obſervable in the *Meſſias*. That he moreover wrought ſeveral Miracles to prove his Miſſion. That having been crucified by the *Jews*, he, after three days, roſe again, and was carried up into Heaven. To which we may add, that after his Aſcenſion, his Apoſtles proclaimed his *Reſurrection* throughout all the World, and confirmed it by various and infinite Miracles. That this Teſtimony which they gave, drew on them a thouſand cruel Perſecutions; and engaged them into the neceſſity of undergoing Poverty, Contempt, Impriſonments, and the moſt cruel Puniſhments the World could inflict on them; yet all this was not able to make them alter their courſe. That their Preaching perſwaded an infinite number of People, of all *Nations*, and eſpecially great numbers of the *Jews*. That the Church, which they

they founded by this means, ſuffered an uninterrupted Perſecution, for the ſpace of 300 Years; and yet daily encreaſed, and ſpread it ſelf over the whole World.

'Tis true, that Mr. *Huet* has not inſiſted on the laſt of theſe Facts; but beſides, that they be of the ſame Order as the preceding; I believe 'tis fit they ſhould be added, as being of great uſe for the eſtabliſhing of the Truth of *Chriſtian Religion*. In a word, if both one and the other be true, 'tis not poſſible but the Chriſtian Faith muſt come from God; and he that denies ſo neceſſary a Conſequence may deny the cleareſt Truths which have hap'ned in the World.

Theſe Facts being true, the Birth of Jeſus Chriſt, his Actions, his *Death*, his *Reſurrection*, his *Aſcenſion*, and in general, all the particulars of his Life have been foretold, ſeveral Ages before they have happened; and what is moſt conſiderable, they have been foretold, not by one or two particular Perſons, but by a long Train, as I may ſay, of Prophets, who have ſucceeded one another in ſeveral Ages, and who ſeem to have been chiefly rais'd up for this purpoſe: by Prophets, I ſay, in whom were to be ſeen all the Marks, which denote Perſons inſpired of God.

If theſe Matters of Fact be true, our Saviour himſelf has juſtified his Miſſion by a great number of Miracles, all infinitely above the force of Nature, and circumſtanced in the likelieſt manner in the World, to perſuade us they were the immediate Effects of an *Almighty* Power.

If theſe things be true, the Eternal God has raiſed up his Son from the Grave, took him up into Heaven; and thereby declared, in an unqueſtionable manner, That he owned him, not only for his great Prophet, but for his only Son; it not being to be ſuppoſed, he would

do all these things in favour of one that had falsly usurp'd that Title.

If these Facts be true, *Christianity* has establish'd it self in the World, in a manner wholly Divine; and which shews, with the greatest evidence, That *Heaven* has concern'd it self in it; the Powers thereof alone being able to triumph over the Resistances and Oppositions of the Earth. So that I do not comprehend how a Man can acknowledg all these things, and deny Christian Religion to be of God.

You are in the right, repli'd I, but the difficulty, if there be any, consists in establishing the Truth of these things; How will you prove them? For you know the *Infidels* are not agreed in them. The Infidels, said he, do not deny all of them. They acknowledg several of them, and which consequently there's no need of justifying. As to the rest, in which they will not agree with us, it's no hard matter to establish the Truth of them.

But what Proofs, said I, must one use for this? Such as are wont to be offered to prove these kind of things, answered he. I know, all sorts of Proofs, are not proper to establish all kind of *Truths*. Abstracted Verities, such as are those which *Metaphysicks* teach us, are not proved by the Senses, nor by *Authority*, but by Demonstrations. Whereas on the contrary, Matters of Fact do not shew themselves, at least in this manner; but if they be present, we make People see or touch them, whom we would convince of the truth of them; and if they are past, and at a distance, we use the Testimony of those who have seen them, or certainly known them.

Thus the Truths, which serve for a Foundation to the Proofs of the Christian Religion, consisting in Facts, and those past and ancient enough; you plainly see hence,

hence, we muſt not expect to eſtabliſh them by Metaphyſical or Mathematical Demonſtrations, nor by the Depoſitions of Senſe. We muſt content our ſelves with the Teſtimony of thoſe, who have ſeen them with their own Eyes, and who could not be deceived themſelves, nor have any deſign of deceiving others.

Is this ſufficient? repli'd I. A bare Teſtimony of Men; can it produce any thing elſe than a Humane Faith? And is *Humane* Faith a ſufficient Foundation for Divine Faith? Is not Humane Faith a kind of Opinion? and can an Opinion uphold what the Scripture calls *(e)* the *Subſtance of things hoped for, and a demonſtration of ſuch as are not ſeen.* (e) Heb. xi. i.

I am ſurpriz'd, ſaid he, that ſo ſmall a thing ſhould ſtop you. When we conſider, in the Teſtimony received, only the bare Authority of him that ſpeaketh; when we attend to that alone, and the Faith which is grounded thereon, has no other Foundation, than the eſteem we have for the Probity and Sincerity of the Witneſs; I muſt acknowledg to you, there's no more in all this but an Humane Faith, Opinion, and Probability: and I muſt moreover acknowledg, that this is not a ſufficient Foundation for *Divine* Faith. But it oft happens, That beſides this Perſuaſion which we have of the Probity and Sincerity of the Witneſs, or from other Reaſons which we have to believe his Veracity; even theſe Reaſons may be ſo ſtrong, as to drive away all Doubts, and inſpire us with an entire certainty. For Example, You and I have never been at *Rome*, we cannot know there's a City bears that Name, but from the Teſtimony of thoſe that have ſeen it. Yet this Teſtimony is ſo circumſtanc'd, that a Man muſt be a Fool, or believe others are ſuch, to reject it. In effect, there are ſo many People which aſſure us of it; thoſe that

that affirm it, have ſo little intereſt to deceive us; we ſee ſo many things happen, which ſhew that all the World is perſuaded of it, That there are few Truths we leſs doubt of than this. And this is that we call Moral Certitude, which exeludes all Doubt, and which according to Mr. *Huet*, is no leſs than that of Metaphyſical, or Mathematical Demonſtrations.

And this comes very near what one may ſay of the Teſtimony of thoſe who witneſs the Matters of Fact above mentioned. This Teſtimony was not given by one or two Perſons, but by ſeveral, at divers times, and in different places. All theſe Witneſſes may have been perfectly inſtructed in the Facts which they atteſt, ſeeing they might have ſeen them with their own Eyes. They had no worldly Intereſt in ſaying what they did: It was, on the contrary, much their intereſt to conceal or deny it. A thouſand ſuch-like Circumſtances do ſhew, that they ſpake what they thought; all which added together, will not permit a Man to doubt of the truth of their Teſtimony. So that we have ſomething more than a bare Opinion, for we have a perfect Certitude.

By what I can perceive, ſaid I, you are not of the Humour of a great number of your Divines, who ſeem to delight themſelves in extenuating the force and clearneſs of theſe Proofs. You know there are ſome *(d)* who affirm, they are only probable. Others aſſure us *(e)*, That their Evidence is not ſo great, but that there are other things which have as full conviction, and yet are falſe. Some ſay they be obſcure Reaſons, and which do not convince the Mind, that they conſtrain not an aſſent; and therefore the Will muſt determine the Mind, which theſe Arguments leave at full liberty.

(*d*) Durand. in 3 diſt. 24. queſt. 3.
(*e*) Du Val in 22. pag. 41.

I do not only, ſaid he to me, not approve all this, but I do not think 'tis ſufferable. You are in the right, ſaid

I,

I, and I am glad to find you of this Opinion: Not but that what your Divines affirm, gives me great advantage againſt your Proofs. But beſides, that I can acquit my ſelf without them; I am far from preferring ſo ſmall an Intereſt, to that of the Glory of Chriſtianity; which partly conſiſts in the force and validity of the Arguguments, which eſtabliſh the Divinity of it.

Let us then eſteem theſe Reaſons more than probable; and as having that degree of evidence which begets a moral Certainty, excluding all doubtfulneſs; and which perſwadeth not only, that the Matter is as we believe it, but moreover that it cannot be otherwiſe; and that 'tis morally impoſſible it ſhould not be. This being ſuppoſed, do you believe theſe Proofs have the higheſt degree of this Evidence?

I in effect ſuppoſe, That the moral Evidence conſiſts not in an indiviſible Point. It receives ſeveral degrees, yea infinite ones; It ariſes from the concourſe of Circumſtances which give weight to the Teſtimony, on which it is grounded: and as theſe Circumſtances may be compacted, and diverſified into a thouſand different ſhapes; there may be in them a thouſand different degrees of this Evidence. So that though it be morally evident, there be two Cities in *Italy*, one of which is called *Rome*, and the other *Viterbe*; yet we are more certain of the exiſtence of the firſt, than of that of the ſecond, becauſe we have more Relations of the one than of the other. It's morally evident, that *Alexander*, *Ceſar*, and *Henry* IV have been, than that the firſt conquer'd *Darius*, and the ſecond the *Gauls*, and that the third diſſipated the League. Yet we are more certain of the latter of theſe Facts, than of the ſecond; and of the ſecond, more than of the firſt. Believe then, that the Facts, whence are drawn the Proofs of Chriſtianity,

ſtianity, are as evident, as that there is a City called *Rome*.

First of all, ſaid he to me, I think we are not obliged to make the ſame judgment of all theſe Facts, ſome of them being more evident than others; and conſequently one cannot ſay of all of them, without exception, that they are as unqueſtionable as the Exiſtence of *Rome*; but yet, I think, we may ſay it of ſome of them.

Suppoſing, ſaid I, one might ſay it of all of them. You will at leaſt grant, that is as much as can be ſaid of them; and that it is more evident, that whatever you have offered is true, than it is, That there's in *Italy* a City known under the name of *Rome*.

This is, ſaid he, a thing which I am far from denying, and which no Body ever did or will deny. There is even one of our Divines who has ſaid the ſame in ſo many words *(g)*; and I am perſwaded, that all the reſt would have ſaid the ſame had they the occaſion.

(g) *Martinon* de fide Diſp. 10. Sect. 8. Num. 60.

Let me, ſaid I, offer you another Queſtion, and then I will conclude. Do you think that the higheſt degree of moral Evidence, is higher than the higheſt degree of the Evidence of Senſe? Do you believe, for Example, that 'tis more evident to you and I, that there's a City called *Rome*, than 'tis at preſent evident to us that it's day?

I am far from thinking ſo, repli'd he: The moral Evidence is grounded on the certainty of Senſe; and if our Senſes may deceive us, the moral Evidence is a mere *Chimera*. How, for Example, can I know there is ſuch a Town called *Rome*, if thoſe who have ſeen it, and on whoſe Word I rely, may be deceived themſelves?

It

It muſt then be granted, That the moral Evidence is never greater than that of Senſe. I add, 'tis far leſs; the Reaſon is, That if we will build on the Depoſition of a Witneſs, we ſhould not only be ſure he knows what he ſays; we ſhould alſo know, that he ſays what he thinks, and diſguiſes not his Sentiments. Seeing then we are never ſo ſure of what others think, as of what we think our ſelves; ſo we are never ſo certain that others have ſeen what they affirm, as we are certain we ſee what we behold.

It's then plain, That I am more aſſured of what I do not know, but by the relation of my Senſes, than of that which has the higheſt degree of moral Evidence. But this is not all, for, I ſay, but one half of what may be alledg'd. The Example which you have made uſe of, gives me occaſion to add ſomething ſtronger. You ask me, if it be more evident there's a City called *Rome*, than 'tis evident that it's now Day. You do not conſider, That I do not only know, by my own Senſes, it is Day, but by thoſe of others. For were I, in fine, blind, yet I might know this with certainty, I need only to be led to the *Exchange*, to Church, to Dinner, *&c.* for this purpoſe. And therefore I take it for granted, That the blind Men about our Streets, are as certain 'tis Day, as that there is ſuch a place as *Rome*.

I believe then, That the Evidence which ariſes from the relations of Senſe, conſidered alone, is not greater than the moral Evidence, being impoſſible to be leſs, as I now proved; I affirm, That in this Suppoſition, to demand whether 'tis more evident it is Day, than whether there be ſuch a City as *Rome*, is juſt as if you ſhould ask, whether two be more than one. The Exiſtence of *Rome*, as to us, has but one only Evidence, and that a moral one: Whereas, *it is now Day*, has two,

the Moral Evidence, and the Evidence of Sense: Each of these two is at least equal to that of the Existence of *Rome*. It is at least then as much again evident it is Day, as that there's a City called *Rome*.

Yet is it true, said I, it's more evident the Eucharist is Bread and Wine, than that it is Day: Only the Senses of those who live, and are awake at present, attest the latter; whereas the Senses of all Men, who live, or have lived, since the planting of the Gospel, have affirm'd the former. All our Senses do not attest it's now Day, only our Sight tells us so, whereas all our Senses tell us, That the *Eucharist* is Bread and Wine. In effect, take a consecrated Host, take consecrated Wine; Ask your Eyes what they are? Ask your Nose, your Palat, and your Hands; Ask them ten thousand times the same Question; they will ever answer you, what they have always answer'd those who have consulted them on this Matter. They will tell you, 'tis Bread and Wine; In a word, the Senses never attested any thing in a more clear, expressive, and authentic manner, than what they depose on the Subject of the *Eucharist*. And if they deceive us herein; they are not to be believed in any thing whatever.

Grant we then the Proofs of *Christianity* do use the highest degree of Moral Evidence, seeing the Testimony of our Senses circumstanc'd in the manner as that is, which shew's us the Eucharist to be Bread and Wine, hath at least twice as much evidence as that which has the highest degree of moral Evidence; it's beyond all question that this Testimony is twice again as evident as the Proofs of *Christianity*.

This is clear, and I doe not believe, you either will, or can deny it. Here then are three grand Conclusions, which I draw from this Principle.

The

The firſt, That if *Tranſubſtantiation* were one of the Doctrins of *Chriſtianity*, as you pretend, Chriſtian Religion would be oppoſed with greater ſtrength than Mr. *Huet* could bring forth to maintain it. In effect, did *Tranſubſtantiation* make a part of *Chriſtian* Religion, one might oppoſe againſt it, whatever is offered againſt *Tranſubſtantiation.*

I have now ſhew'd you, one may oppoſe againſt *Tranſubſtantiation*, all the evidence of Senſe. One might offer all this ſame Evidence againſt *Chriſtianity*, were it true that *Chriſtianity* comprehended *Tranſubſtantiation.*

This is that which oppoſes *Chriſtianity* in your Principles. Let's ſee now, what Mr. *Huet* do's to maintain it. He brings Arguments, which, as we have already obſerv'd are only grounded on moral Evidence, which is never half ſo great as that of ſenſe. If then two be more than one; it's clear, That granting Tranſubſtantiation to be one of the Chriſtian Doctrins, Chriſtianity is attack'd with greater ſtrength than Mr. *Huet* can defend it with. It is clear, according to this Suppoſition, an Infidel will more ſtrongly prove, That Chriſtian Religion is falſe, than Mr. *Huet* can prove it is true.

All which would never be, were *Tranſubſtantiation* put out of the number of *Chriſtian* Doctrins. By which means, the Proofs of this *Holy Religion* would conſerve all their ſtrength; and the Infidels would have nothing that's rational to oppoſe againſt them. Theſe Proofs are moſt ſolid in themſelevs, and capable of convincing every reaſonable Body, who ſearches the Truth, and is diſpoſed to follow it through all parts where he finds it. There's nothing but Tranſubſtantiation, which weakens them.

Granting Tranſubſtantiation, theſe Proofs will be of no validity: Take away this Doctrine, our Proofs ſubſiſt, and have their effect. It do's not belong then to your Doctors who hold *Tranſubſtantiation*, to defend Chriſtianity. The beſt Arguments will never be good ones in their Mouths. Only we can propoſe them without weakning them. So that I told you nothing but what you find true, when I affirmed a while ago, That Mr. *Huet*'s Book, which would be an excellent Work, were it writ by a Proteſtant, is without conviction, coming from a Man of your Party.

And this is, Sir, my *firſt Concluſion.*

The *ſecond* follows, which is, That whereas an Infidel, to whom was offered Mr. *Huet*'s Arguments, without any mention of Tranſubſtantiation, or who ſhould ſuppoſe that Chriſtianity do's not oblige us to believe it, would be irrational, ſhould he not embrace a Religion ſo well grounded; ſo in like manner he would fall in to as great a fault, and act as much againſt Reaſon; if ſuppoſing the contrary, and letting himſelf be perſwaded, one cannot be a Chriſtian without believing *Tranſubſtantiation*, he ſhould receive both Tranſubſtantiation and *Chriſtian Religion.*

What I have now been ſaying to you, does neceſſarily draw along with it this Conſequence. But to remark more clearly the neceſſity of it, be pleaſed to obſerve, That what makes an Infidel a *Chriſtian*, are the Reaſons which perſwade him, That the Chriſtian Religion was revealed by God. In effect, that which induces us to believe Things, are the Reaſons, good or bad, which ſeem to us to uphold the Opinion which we embrace. So that ſhould one Perſuade ones ſelf of any thing without Ground or Reaſon, that Man will act fooliſhly and ſottiſhly, though the thing it ſelf ſhould

ſhould be true. So the Infidel, who ſhall make himſelf a Chriſtian without Reaſon, would apparently offend againſt good *Senſe*. And this is the general Notion of your Divines, which I need not alledg to you; for having read them, you muſt needs remember them.

A Man then never believes without Reaſon, if he believes wiſely and judiciouſly: But it ſeldom hapning, that the Reaſons are all on one ſide, there being commonly ſome for, and ſome againſt; you will not deny, but every time when this happens, it's the duty of a wiſe Man, and of ſuch a one who will not be miſtaken, to take the Ballance, if I may ſo ſpeak, and exactly weigh theſe Reaſons, to give the preference to thoſe which appear to him of greateſt weight.

I do not know whether any Body uſes to do otherwiſe. One may, I confeſs, prefer Reaſons, which in truth and reality, are of leſs force than the contrary ones. But this is, when a Man deceives himſelf, by taking the weakeſt Arguments for the ſtrongeſt. For, in fine, I am perſuaded, That a Man convinced of the weakneſs of a Reaſon, will never after value that as he do's another, which appears ſtronger to him; ſeeing to yield to a Reaſon, is to judg it ſtronger than that which oppoſes it.

Ex duobus credibilibus non tenetur homo credere alterum, quod eſt minus, vel equaliter credibile. Bannez 22. Quæſt. 10. Art. 1. Concl. 3. Non eſt prudentis hominis alteram partem aſſentire præ alterâ, ſi pari vel fere pari momento rationes utrinque urgeant. Cenſeo ad hæc neq; fieri omnino poſſe, ut eam partem quis approbet aſſenſu ſuo in quam nihil inclinat majoris ponderis, quam in adverſam. Rationis utrinq; pares rationes ſunt nullæ. Multo minus fieri poteſt ut alteram partem quis approbet, ſi in alteram inclinet pondus majus. Eſt. Dilucid. Communis doctrinæ Theol. n. 22, & 23.

It's the ſame with Reaſons or Arguments, as 'tis with Weights; put two Weights in a pair of Scales, and if they be equal, the Scales ſhall ſtand at an equal ballance; if they be unequal, the Scale will immediately,

ately incline downwards, wherein is the greateſt weight. In the ſame manner offer a rational Man Arguments, which maintain an Opinion, and others which oppoſe it. If after all things well conſidered, he finds theſe Opinions of equal force, he will encline to neither ſide. But for the ſmalleſt advantage, which thoſe of one ſide have over thoſe of the other, the Mind determines it ſelf for the ſtrongeſt; Or at leaſt, it do's not determine it ſelf for the weakeſt; and it is every whit as impoſſible it ſhould do it, as 'tis impoſſible a leſſer Weight ſhould weigh down a greater.

But whether this be ſo, or not, you will at leaſt allow me this, That it ought not to be, and that 'tis contrary to good *ſenſe* to determine ones ſelf in favour of an Opinion, which we ſee grounded on Reaſons leſs ſtrong than thoſe which oppoſe it. And this is what your Authors do acknowledg *(h)*; and in effect, were it otherwiſe, one might innocently leave a good Religion, and take up a bad one; although we ſaw the Religion we leave more firmly grounded than that we take up. But this being ridiculous, it muſt be acknowledged, that good Senſe will not let a Man embrace an Opinion which he ſees is more ſtrongly oppoſed than maintained.

(*h*) Martinon de fide Diſp. 5. Sect. 7. n. 42.

This being granted, Sir, Let's ſuppoſe an Infidel, to whom is offered Mr. *Huet*'s Arguments; if he be wiſe, he will not yield to them, till he has ſeen whether there be any thing which oppoſes theſe Arguments which counterballances them, or diſſipates them. Imagine we afterwards the Chriſtian Doctrine to be propoſed to him, diſcharged of *Tranſubſtantiation*. 'Tis clear, he will find nothing which ſhall counterpoiſe theſe Reaſons. So that theſe Reaſons being good, and nothing

nothing being able to diminiſh the ſolidity of them, if he be wiſe he will embrace them.

Let us on the contrary imagine, that by an Illuſion, of which we have ſeen a thouſand Examples, he is made believe, That Tranſubſtantiation is inſeparable from *Chriſtianity*. What will he do? If he be rational, he will take the Ballance, and weigh on one hand Mr. *Huet*'s Arguments, and on the other, thoſe which combat Tranſubſtantiation, and conſequently Chriſtianity, in the ſuppoſition he is in that they are inſeparable. If he holds the Ballance even, he will find, That the Reaſons which oppoſe Tranſubſtantiation, weigh more than thoſe which favour Chriſtianity; He will find that the firſt weigh two, and the ſecond but one. In effect, the weight of Reaſons is their Evidence. The Reaſons which oppoſe Tranſubſtantiation, have all the evidence of Senſe; thoſe of Mr. *Huet* have only a moral Evidence, which at moſt have but half of that of Senſe. The firſt then weigh as much again as the ſecond. This being ſo, how can you expect the Infidel ſhould give the preference to the ſecond over the firſt; and whom will you perſwade, that if he does do it, he will act regularly.

Do you know what right Reaſon will ſuggeſt to him? That Tranſubſtantiation is not one of the Doctrines which *Chriſtianity* teaches. He will ſay it is impoſſible Mr. *Huet*'s Reaſons ſhould be valid, if Chriſtianity comprehends Tranſubſtantiation; and it muſt neceſſarily be, either that this Doctrine has been added to the Chriſtian Religion, contrary to the intention of its Founder, or that theſe Reaſons be falſe. Yet it's apparent theſe Reaſons are not falſe, ſeeing they are evident; and that the more they are conſidered, the greater impreſſion they make. We muſt then believe, that

that Tranſubſtantiation which would deſtroy them, ſhould it take place, is not one of the Chriſtian Doctrines.

He will confirm himſelf in this Opinion, by this Conſideration, That the Author of Chriſtianity, whoever he was, having form'd his Religion, with a deſign to make it be embraced by all Men; and being able to make it very fit to be univerſally received, by not burdening it with *Tranſubſtantiation*, it is not to be ſuppoſed he introduced this Doctrine, which is likely only to make it be rejected by judicious Men.

This will more eſpecially appear to him inconceivable in reſpect of God, whom he will acknowledg for the true Author of this Holy Religion, if he well comprehends the force of Mr. *Huet*'s Reaſons. So good and wiſe a God, could not on one hand require Men ſhould embrace the Revelation he offered them; and on the other, lay an invincible oppoſition between this Revelation, and the pureſt notices of Reaſon, which he himſelf had given them to be their Rule in all Caſes. He could not on one hand oblige them to be Chriſtians, under pain of eternal damnation; and on the other, ſo order things that they could not be ſuch, without violating all the Maxims of good *Senſe*, and all the Rules of Prudence.

And this is, Sir, what the Infidel will ſay if he be a rational Perſon. But if he has not underſtanding enough to perceive all this, yet at leaſt he will ſee, That right Reaſon will not let him embrace the Chriſtian Religion, ſuch as it is offered him.

I add, in the *Third place*, That not only he ought not to embrace it, but that it is impoſſible he ſhould. Which is eaſy to be proved from the principles of your own

own Divines. All of them hold (*i*), That the firſt Act of Divine Faith, is always preceded by a Judgment morally evident; which ſhew's, That what one is going to believe, is worthy to be believed. They affirm, That without this Judgment Faith can never be form'd in the Soul. They ſay, moreover, That this Judgment is only grounded on what they call *Reaſons of Belief*, or Motives of Credibility; which are, at bottom the Proofs of Chriſtianity. They ſay, That the Infidel weighing theſe Reaſons, and finding them good and ſolid; he concludes, that the Doctrine which they maintain ought to be received.

(*i*) Greg. de Val. Tom. 3. Diſp. 1. Queſt. 1. Punct 1. §. 7. Coninte de actib. ſup. diſp. 13. dub. 1. Murat. de fid. diſp. 16. Sect. 3 Goner. de fid. diſp. 1. art. 8. Rhod. de fid. queſt. 2. Sect. 4. §. 2.

I now ask you, How the Infidel can form this inward Judgment, and pronounce that Chriſtian Religion deſerves to be received, in the time wherein he ſees that the Reaſons which induce him to embrace it, are oppoſed by other Reaſons, ſtronger and clearer? I demand of you, if in caſe this can be, Whether ſuch a Judgment would not be apparently falſe? For how in effect, can one ſay a thing is worthy to be believed, when one has more reaſon to think it falſe than to believe it's true? Do we call ſuch a thing credible? Is't not rather incredible?

I might drive on theſe Conſequences father; I could ſhew you that Tranſubſtantiation hath other Conſequences, which are no leſs vexatious; But this not appearing neceſſary, I ſhall content my ſelf at this time, with asking you, Whether theſe three Conſequences, which I have taken from your Belief, are not very terrible? and whether it be not better to renounce the Doctrine which draws them after it, than to admit them? Yet they be neceſſary, and you muſt receive them, unleſs you'l deny ſome of the Propoſitions which you have granted me.

Neither will this much help you, becauſe that in effect whatever you have granted me is moſt certain, and when you would have this brought into queſtion, I'le not fear the making you grant it again, there being nothing in all this but what is highly evident.

What you now ſaid to me at length, anſwer'd Mr. *N.* is plauſible enough, and I muſt confeſs I did not believe your Cauſe could be pleaded ſo ſtrongly. And yet Iam perſwaded, that this is not ſolid, and I hope to anſwer all you have ſaid, when I have thought more of it. Pray let me ſleep upon it, and I'le give you an account to morrow morning of what has come into my mind.

I was far from denying ſo reaſonable a requeſt; I only told him before I went away, That if this Proof appear'd to him ſtronger, than thoſe we are wont to uſe in this matter, this only aroſe from a certain *Air* of Novelty, which might be in the manner of propoſing it; and that in the main, the common Proofs are no leſs convincing than thoſe; and if they did not appear ſo, this only proceeded from our being inſenſibly accuſtomed to believe them falſe, there having been a thouſand things invented to elude the force of them.

It being long ſince, ſaid I, that they have been oppoſed againſt you; your Doctors therefore have left no Stone unturn'd to leſſen the value of them. To this end they have forg'd a thouſand Diſtinctions, ſought a thouſand Subterfuges, and have wanted no Artifice nor Colour to make them paſs in the World. And therefore when we offer them againſt you, we find you always ready to ſlight them. It would have been the ſame with what I juſt now offer'd you, had you foreſeen the courſe of my Objections; and you would have taken care not to ſay ſeveral things with which your Books are full, and which ſhould be henceforward left out,

out, unleſs you are minded to ſhew the World how you condemn your own Principles.

I hereupon took my leave of him, and withdrew; praying God, from the bottom of my Heart, to bleſs my Endeavours; and ſo to proſper this Seed which was ſown, (as it were unawares) that it might one day bring forth Fruit to his Glory.

CONFERENCE II.

The Second Proof, That Tranſubſtantiation diſcrediting the Teſtimony of our Senſes, does abſolutely overthrow the principal Reaſons which confirm the Truth of Chriſtian Religion.

WHEN I parted from Mr. *N.* there was no mention made of the Place where we were to meet; which made me believe (knowing his obliging temper) he would come the next day to me. But being unwilling he ſhould give himſelf that trouble, I was reſolved to prevent him, by being with him firſt. He told me he was troubled he could not be as diligent as I was; for immediately after I had left him, a Buſineſs came upon him of great Importance, which had employed his Thoughts to that very time; but having ended that Affair, he hoped he ſhould now have an opportunity of acquitting himſelf of the Engagement he was in.

Will you, ſaid I to him, let me impart to you another Thought, which has great conformity with that, which was the Subject of our Yeſterday's Diſcourſe. By which means you may examine both theſe Arguments at a time; and perhaps the one will hinder you from ſtopping at things, which will appear to you proper to get rid of the other.

I am of your mind, ſaid he, but I deſire you would propoſe this ſecond Proof all at once. For, in fine, there's oft more artifice, than ſincerity, in diſcovering what one has to ſay by pieces. He that anſwers, and knows not where his Adverſary will lead him, takes many times fruitleſs Precautions, and ſometimes neglects neceſſary Ones. He lets paſs certain things which ſtrike deepeſt, and amuſes himſelf with others, which are of no effect. And therefore I think it beſt, That the Reſpondent ſhould ſee at once the Difficulty propoſed to him, and know at firſt what he is to take care of; and therefore, I pray you, henceforward, to deal in this manner with me.

What you ſay would be neceſſary, repli'd I, had you an Adverſary who ſought only to ſurprize, and who more regarded Victory than Truth. But, I muſt tell you plainly, this Artifice appears ſo inconſiderable, and unworthy of an honeſt Man, eſpecially of a Chriſtian, that I cannot but be troubled at your ſuſpicion. Pray therefore believe, this is not my intention; for if I have followed, in our preceding Diſcourſe, ſuch a method as you do not like, 'twas becauſe I thought it the fitteſt to lead thoſe inſenſibly to the Truth, who are fartheſt from it. You know, the greateſt Men among the Ancients have been of this Sentiment; and that it was perticularly the Method of *Socrates*, and his famous Diſciple *Plato*. Yet ſeeing you will

have

have me take another courſe, I ſhall reduce my ſecond Argument to three Propoſitions; all three being ſo evidently certain, that I cannot ſee how they can be overthrown.

The firſt is; That if *Tranſubſtantiation* takes place, our Senſes are deceived in taking for Bread and Wine what is not ſo.

The ſecond is; That if our Senſes may be miſtaken in the *Euchariſt*, they may be as well miſtaken in every thing elſe; ſo that their Depoſitions have nothing certain.

The third is; That if our Senſes may be miſtaken in the diſcovery of their Objects, be they what they will, The Proofs of *Chriſtian Religion* are of no value.

The better to comprehend the Force of this Argument, I believe 'twill not be amiſs to paſs over it again, and carefully to examine its Propoſitions.

The firſt appears to me very evident; for I have always taken Error to be the perſuading of a Man's ſelf, That a thing is what it is not, or to judg that it is not what it is. This being granted, it cannot be denied, but that our Senſes do deceive us in the Euchariſt, if they attempt the perſwading us, That it is any other thing than what it is.

Yet this they do, if Tranſubſtantiation takes place: For, in fine, if this Doctrine were true, the Euchariſt would not be Bread and Wine, but our Saviour's proper Body and Blood. And yet our Senſes atteſt the contrary; they all unanimouſly ſay, with one Voice, that it is not our Lord's Body and Blood, but Bread and Wine.

To prove what I ſay, Shew the *Euchariſt* to an Infidel, who has no knowledg of your Myſtery, and ask him what it is. He'l anſwer, without heſitation, 'tis Bread and Wine. Ask a Child the ſame queſtion, he will return you the ſame anſwer. In fine, offer it to a Brute, and he will do what he is wont when ordinary Bread and Wine is ſet before him.

Now what is the common light to this Infidel, this Child, and brute Beaſt? nothing elſe but that of Senſe: whereupon it cannot be denied but our ſenſes tell us, that the Euchariſt is Bread and Wine; and it appears impoſſible to affirm, that it is not ſo, without giving the lye to theſe Faculties.

This will appear more clearly, if you pleaſe to conſider, That the Faculty which tells us that the *Euchariſt* is Bread and Wine, is the ſame which makes us diſcern other Objects; and makes us ſay of each of them, *This is ſuch a thing.*

Who will deny, that 'tis by means of the Senſes we diſcover what is preſent to us? In effect, thoſe who have loſt the uſe of their Senſes, do diſcern nothing: and thoſe who are not abſolutely deprived of theſe Faculties, yet have them weak'ned through defect of the Organs, are eaſily miſtaken. Lead a blind Man within ſome paces of a Statue, and ask him, what that is which ſtands before him? He will anſwer you, he do's not know: offer the ſame queſtion to another that is not quite blind, but yet has bad Eyes; He'l tel you perhaps, 'tis a Man. Whereas on the contrary, a Man, whoſe ſight is good, will tell you preſently, *'tis a Statue.* Is it not plain then, That 'tis the Sight which diſcerns this Object? When then we ſee the Euchariſt, and we touch and taſte it, we ſay it's Bread and Wine, it's clear we ſay it from the relation of our Eyes,

Eyes, our Hands, and our Mouths. And conſequently if it be found, that 'tis not Bread and Wine, it cannot be denied but that 'tis our Senſes which have cheated, and deceived us.

It is not worth the while to ſet upon the proving of a thing which your Divines willingly grant. One might produce ſome hundred's of places in their Works, where they affirm what I ſay (*a*). They maintain, that the Fathers (*b*) have ſtrictly charged their People not to truſt their Senſes in this occaſion, extreamly blaming thoſe who ſuffer themſelves to be guided by theſe Faculties, in a matter wherein according to them we ſhould follow no other Light than that of Faith and Revelation.

(*a*) *See the Treatiſe of the Authority of the Senſes*, Chap. 6.
(*b*) Bell. de Euch. lib. 3. cap. 24.

They pretend nothing do's more enhance the merit of this Faith, Than her raiſing her ſelf above the Senſes, and perſwading her ſelf of the contrary of what theſe Faculties do witneſs to us. I doe not doubt, Sir, but you have obſerv'd all this in the reading of your Authors.

It's true, anſwer'd he, and I will not conteſt with you about this firſt Propoſition; But I will not grant you the ſecond. For, in fine, what neceſſity is there, that the Senſes deceiving us in this Object, they cannot faithfully inſtruct us in any other? Is it not very likely, that this is a ſingle Error, and without any conſequence? May they not deceive us in this occaſion, and in ſome others, without extending this to all? In effect, the greateſt Lyars do ſometimes tell true, and perhaps there is not one amongſt this ſort of People, but ſpeaks more Truth than Lies. Why may we not then ſay the ſame thing of our Senſes?

You have not well comprehended my meaning, rerepli'd I, for I did not ſay, That if our Senſes be deceived

deceived in the Euchariſt, they muſt neceſſarily be deceived in every thing elſe. But only that they may be ſo, that the thing is not impoſſible, and we ſhall never be certain of the contrary, unleſs we know it by ſome other way. This is all, I ſay, and I hope to ſhew you in what follows, that I need no more.

In the mean time, my Propoſition thus expreſt, is undenyable. In effect, he that deceives once, may deceive always; and 'tis ſufficient, a Witneſs be once detected of Falſity, to be ſuſpected all his Life. Thus the Senſes, according to you, making untrue reports on the Euchariſt, we may as well ſuſpect them to do the ſame on other things.

This is clear; but to make it more unqueſtionable, be pleaſed to conſider, That if the Senſes do once deceive, their relation is no longer a certain Mark, and an unqueſtionable Proof of Truth: For how can we look on that to be a certain Mark of Truth, which is ſometimes joyn'd with Error? And conſequently, To have no other Foundation for ones Perwaſions, than the relations of our Senſes, this would be to reſt on uncertain and doubtful Marks, and to expoſe ones ſelf to the greateſt likelihood of being deceived.

To ſay the ſame thing in another manner, let me, Sir, ask you, Whether the bare relation of our Senſes, without any other Succours, be a ſufficient Motive to perſuade us what they atteſt, or not? If it be, 'tis not poſſible our Senſes can once deceive us; for if they ſhould, we ſhould have a ſufficient Motive to perſuade us of a thing which is falſe, which we muſt be far from ſaying. For were this ſo, we ſhould be bound to deceive our ſelves; and this Error would not only be excuſable, but neceſſary; there would be an Obligation of falling into it, and 'twould be a fault if we did not. But this is intollerably abſurd. Now

Now if the Teſtimony of our Senſes be not a ſufficient Foundation whereon to ground a ſolid Perſwaſion; 'Tis plain there's no certainty in reſting on their Teſtimony, and that 'tis imprudent to rely on them. So that we muſt ſay one of theſe two things; either that the Senſes do never deceive, no not in the Euchariſt; or if that they do deceive in the Euchariſt, they may always deceive, and that their report is never certain.

And ſo much the more, ſeeing there was never any occaſion, wherein one has more reaſon to perſwade ones ſelf, That our ſenſes do not deceive us, than in this; 'Tis not only one of our ſenſes, which ſhews us the Euchariſt to be Bread and Wine; as it happens in infinite occaſions, where the ſingle teſtimony of one of theſe Faculties, ſuffices to make us ſtrongly believe things. But all the Senſes, wherewith Nature has provided us; Not the Senſes of one or two particular Perſons, as yours or mine, but thoſe of all Men in the World, not excepting one. Theſe Senſes make not their Reports of a ſtrange and foreign Matter, but of one of the moſt ordinary and familiar things they are converſant about. So that if they may be deceived herein, they may be deceiv'd in every thing elſe; for I know not in what occaſion they may be certain, if not in this.

I do in effect acknowledg, it ſomtimes happens our Senſes do deceive us, whether through defect of the Organ, which is out of order, or through the failure of the *Medium*, which is not ſimple and uniform, or by reaſon of the diſtance, or diſproportion of the Object. But this hinders me not from ſaying, you cannot alledg me any Example, which ſhews us theſe Faculties abuſe us in Circumſtances, like thoſe which are to be found in the report they make of the Euchariſt; and wherein not only, none of thoſe different Springs of our

aforemention'd Errors have any place; but wherein a Man may uſe all imaginable precautions, to aſſure himſelf, he is not miſtaken. For, in fine, let not a Man content himſelf with the bare looking on and viewing the Symbols of this Sacrament, but uſe all his other Senſes; and thoſe of all the Men in the world; Let a Man apply himſelf thereto with all poſſible attention, make all tryals and proofs which he can, yet ſtill will his Senſes hold the ſame Language, ever ſaying, 'tis Bread and Wine: So that if they may deceive us in ſuch an occaſion as this, we have nothing left to oppoſe the *Academics*, who have been at ſuch pains to ſhew theſe Faculties are not to be truſted.

In effect, this Proof would be in a different manner convincing, than that which theſe Philoſophers were wont to uſe. They tell us, all Objects appear yellow to Ichterical People, and all Meats bitter to thoſe whoſe Tongues are full of Bile; that a Stick half plung'd into the Water, ſeems either broken or crooked, though it be ſtreight and entire; That a ſquare Spire appears round to thoſe who look on it at a diſtance. But 'tis clear, all this proves nothing againſt thoſe who grant, That our Senſes deceive us when the Organ is out of order, when the *Medium* is not ſimple, when the Object is not placed at a juſt diſtance; and who only pretend the report of theſe Faculties is faithful, out of the caſe mark'd by theſe Exceptions, and ſome others ſuch like. But if it were not in the Euchariſt where 'tis clear, one cannot apply either this Exception, or any other, the cauſe of theſe Faculties would be abſolutely deſperate, and we ſhould have nothing left to defend it.

Yet there muſt be ſomething that is weighty produced in its favour; for were it otherwiſe, the Proofs of Chriſtian Religion would be of no ſolidity. And this

this is (as you ſee) *my third Propoſition*; and if I prove it as ſtrongly as I have proved the two former, I need add nothing to the Concluſion of my Argument, to make you acknowledg what I juſt now offered; That your Tranſubſtantiation do's abſolutely overthrow our ſtrongeſt Arguments againſt Infidelity.

In the mean time, this Propoſition is ſo evident, that I don't believe there's a Diſputant in the World obſtinate enough to contend it with me. Firſt, the Proofs of our Religion are drawn from the Matters of Fact you mention'd Yeſterday, and from the aſſurance which thoſe who delivered them to us, had of their reality. Thoſe that atteſted them, knew them only by the means of their Senſes, not from Arguments or Reaſonings; for they ſaw them with their own Eyes; and by conſequence, if their Eyes, and other Organs of their Senſes might be therein deceived, they had in proper ſpeaking no certainty of them; and if they had no certainty, we are to blame in making account of their Teſtimony.

For example; We believe Jeſus Chriſt is riſen, becauſe the Apoſtles have highly atteſted this Matter of Fact; and that we have juſt occaſion to believe they were ſtrongly perſuaded of the truth of what they ſaid. But what perſwaſion could they have of this, if the Senſes are not to be truſted? And in effect ask them, how they knew their Maſter is riſen? They will only alledg the teſtimony of their Senſes. They will tell you, their Eyes have ſeen him, their Ears have heard him ſpeak, their Hands have touched him. But if both Eyes, Hands, yea and Ears, if all their Senſes are deceivers, who can aſſure us they did not cheat the Apoſtles? who will aſſure us that theſe Holy Men have ef-

fectually ſeen, touch'd, and heard, what they imagin'd they ſaw, touch'd, and heard?

The ſame, I ſay, of the Proofs of the *Jewiſh* Religion, the truth of which is one of the principal Foundations of the Chriſtian Faith. What is the ſtrongeſt Proof of this Holy Religion? Is it not that which is taken from the Prodigy which *Moſes* ſhew'd to the *Jews* when he brought it to them from God? But what certainty can there be of all theſe Prodigies, if the Senſes of thoſe who have been Witneſſes of them, may have been deceived? How could they perſuade themſelves of the reality of them, had they only for a Foundation of their Perſuaſion, the uncertain report of ſome Faculties liable to infinite Errors and Deluſions? Were they not very ſilly People, to expoſe themſelves to ſo many dangers, on ſo ſlight grounds? And are not we alſo very credulous, to build our Faith on the Perſuaſion which theſe People had of theſe Facts? This Faith, I ſay, whereby we ſteer our Lives, and on which we advance ſo many fine Hopes, and magnificent Pretenſions?

This is not all; both one and the other of theſe Proofs, do moreover ſuppoſe in another manner the certitude of the Senſes; Which is, That 'tis only the Senſes which inſtruct in the Teſtimony which theſe Faculties have given, whether to the Ancient *Jews*, or the Apoſtles; and which both one and the other have given to the Truth. For, in fine, how can we know that neither the Jews nor the Apoſtles did atteſt all theſe Facts, but by means of their Senſes? Imagine a Man bereaved of all his five Senſes, or only of the two principal ones, Sight and Hearing; ſuppoſe him at the ſame time both Deaf and Blind; how will you make him

him underſtand the ſolidity of theſe Proofs? You may ſpeak to him long enough of the Prophecies of the Old Teſtament, of our Saviour's and *Moſes* his Miracles, and other things which eſtabliſh the Truth of Chriſtian Religion. This will be juſt the ſame as if you diſcourſed to a Stone.

It's only our Senſes then, which make us receive theſe Proofs. So that ſhould we know, That thoſe of the *Apoſtles*, and other Witneſſes of the Truth, could not deceive them; this would ſignify nothing to us, ſhould we have juſt reaſon to believe we might be deceived by ours. By conſequence, the certainty of Senſe is doubly neceſſary to eſtabliſh the ſolidity of the Proofs of Chriſtianity; and theſe Proofs will be two ways uncertain, if the report of our Senſes be not to be truſted.

See now, Sir, if there be any thing more true than what I told you a while ago, That Tranſubſtantiation abſolutely deſtroys theſe Proofs, and takes from them all their Validity. See whether in ſuppoſing this Doctrine, one may hinder *Libertines* from uſing this arguing: *It's contrary to good Senſe, to receive this Revelation which deſtroys it ſelf, which overthrows its own Foundations, which annuls and diſcredit's the means by which it endeavours to eſtabliſh it ſelf, and whoſe Proofs cannot be true, without being falſe; nor aſſured, without being uncertain.*

This is what may be ſaid of Chriſtianity, if it be true, it teaches things contrary to the relation of our Senſes. For, in fine, Chriſtianity has hitherto eſtabliſh'd it ſelf, only on the depoſitions of theſe Faculties. Hereby it has met with belief in the Minds of Men. If then one of its Maxims be, we muſt not truſt any of our Senſes; it's evident and

un-

unqueſtionable, we may ſay of it what we now affirmed.

It's evident it is ſelf-contradictory, enjoining us on one hand, to believe the report of our Senſes, when they inſtruct us in what ſhould induce us to receive it; and forbidding us at the ſame time to hearken to them in one of its chiefeſt Doctrines. It overthrows its own Foundations, ſeeing it deſtroys the faithfulneſs of our Senſes, on which the perſuaſion which we have of its truth is grounded. Hereby it annuls and diſcredits the means by which it endeavours to ſet up it ſelf; and this is ſo viſible, that we need not undertake to ſhew it. In a word, its Proofs cannot be true, without being falſe; nor certain, without being uncertain. In effect, if the Proofs of Chriſtianity be good, whatever it ſay's is true, and if whatever it ſays be true, theſe Proofs be nothing worth, ſeeing one of the things which it affirms, is, That the report of our Senſes, whence theſe Proofs be taken, is uncertain.

Is it not true, Sir, That ſetting up Tranſubſtantiation, the Infidels would, on very good grounds, uſe this Arguing? In particular, would they not have reaſon to complain, that they are not ſincerely dealt with, ſeeing we pretend to convince them by the Depoſitions of Witneſſes, which we do not produce, till we have ſtrip'd them of all their Authority, and declared them unfaithful, and deceivers?

After this great Intereſt, I ſee nothing which is worth contending for, and if our Faith loſes the means of eſtabliſhing it ſelf in the World, as ſhe do's loſe it in loſing her Proofs: It's not worth the while to demonſtrate the other Conſequences of your Doctrine, nor particularly the Diſorders which the uncertainty of our Senſes once eſtabliſh'd, would infallibly bring forth into the World. They are both infinite and inexplica-

ble,

ble, becauſe that in effect, our Senſes are almoſt the only Guides which we follow; and their Fidelity is the chief Foundation of all the certainty we can have therein. Your abſtracted Truths, which are perceivable only to the Underſtanding, and which are ſo uſeful in Sciences, are of little uſe in the Commerce of the World, wherein Men apply themſelves to things which be ſingular, which are not known but by the interpoſition of the Senſes. So that to ruin the certainty of our Senſes, is to turn all into confuſion, and reduce Men to ſuch a condition, that they ſhall not take a ſtep without being troubled with ſome Scruple.

But as I have already obſerv'd, this is not the Point. 'Tis ſufficient I have ſhew'd, That the ſolidity of the Proofs which eſtabliſh the Truth of Chriſtian Religion, depends on the certainty of our Senſes; ſo that *Tranſubſtantiation* abſolutely deſtroying this certainty, invalidates theſe Proofs, and ſtops the Mouths of thoſe who undertake the Converſion of the Infidels. This ſingle Conſequence is dreadful enough, and we need not draw any other, to ſhew the falſity of the Principle whence it flows.

It's better to paſs to my *third Proof*, which is, to ſhew, That your Doctrine overthrows the certainty of our Reaſon, as well as that of our Senſes; and gives ſuch an eſtabliſhment to Scepticiſm, as bereaves us of all means of finding out the Truth.

And this is what I intend to make clear to you, if I have not already tired your patience. I ſhall hear you with all my Heart, anſwer'd he; but I muſt tell you, That before I hear your third Argument, I ſhould be very glad to examine the two you have already offered me, for I ſee abundance of things which I might oppoſe againſt

againſt what you have ſaid; but they lying ſomething obſcurely and confuſedly in my Mind, I muſt beg time of you to bring them into ſome clearneſs and order; which as ſoon as I have done, I ſhall not fail to wait on you with an account of them.

I eaſily conſented to what he deſired, telling him, I wiſh'd every Body would as maturely examine theſe great Points before they determin'd themſelves. I blam'd the raſhneſs of thoſe, whoſe Eyes are dazl'd with the firſt glance of an Argument, whereby they fall into a ridiculous lightneſs, or an inſupportable obſtinacy. Mr. *N.* ſpake to the ſame purpoſe; and our converſation having for ſome time been on this Point, I took my leave of him and departed.

CON-

CONFERENCE III.

Wherein are confirmed the two Proofs contained in the two preceding Diſcourſes.

THE next Day Mr. *N.* took the pains to come to me, and immediately told me, he had carefully appli'd himſelf to examine my Reaſons, and believed he had found a ſolution of them. I have obſerved, ſaid he to me, that both your Propoſitions depend on the ſame Suppoſition, to wit, That Tranſubſtantiation is directly contrary to the reports of our Senſes; and that whereas this Doctrine tells us the *Euchariſt* is no longer Bread nor Wine, but the proper Body and Blood of our Saviour; our Senſes on the contrary tell us, That this Sacrament is not the Body and Blood of our Saviour, but real Bread and Wine.

This has inclined me to think, That tho our Divines have not conſidered your Proofs in the ſame manner you have propoſed them, yet I might find in their Writings wherewith to defend my ſelf, by what they anſwer to the direct Teſtimony of our Senſes, which your Authors have always objected. I have enquired into what they have ſaid on this Subject, and found five different Solutions. Some of them have abſolutely denied, without reſerve, that our Senſes have any certainty. Others acknowledg, that theſe Faculties do not deceive us in the things comprehended in the order

of Nature; but they will not ſuffer us to conſult them in Matters of Faith. Some allow them a certainty in Matters of Faith, but ſay, 'tis a certainty inferior to that of Faith. Moſt of them aſſure us, That the Senſes do not perceive the Subſtance; ſo that the Error wherein one falls, by perſuading one's ſelf that the Euchariſt is Bread and Wine, is not in the Senſes, but in our Reaſon. Others do, in fine, acknowledg that our Senſes do well perceive the Subſtance, but in an indirect manner, and with great incertitude; ſo that their report is not certain, but in reference to the accidents.

I am well aſſured the two firſt Anſwers be falſe; and ſhould I not otherwiſe know it, your ſecond Reaſon would not permit me to doubt of it. For, in fine, were our Senſes without certainty, whether in general or in particular, in Matters of Faith, the Proofs of *Chriſtian* Religion would be but mere deluſions, as you ſufficiently convinced me Yeſterday.

The third of theſe Anſwers, ſuppoſes a Thing which is falſe, to wit, That a Faculty which has certainty, may ever have need of being corrected. It ſuppoſes another which is very doubtful, and in which our Divines are not agreed, *viz.* That Faith has more certainty than the Teſtimony of our Senſes. Moreover, granting all this to be true, I know not whether one might make uſe of it againſt your Reaſons. You do not ſpeak of the certainty which a Man that believes already may have of the Truths of Salvation, but only of that which one might give an Infidel. But the means to perſwade an Infidel, that the Senſes may deceive, muſt be by convincing him of the Divinity of our Religion, which accuſes the Senſes of Infidelity. And the way to convince him of the Divinity of this Religion, muſt be by Reaſons which ſuppoſe that theſe Faculties do not deceive us.

I.

I do not then make any great reckoning of theſe three Anſwers, and therefore I ſhall not oppoſe them againſt you. But 'tis not the ſame with the two laſt; for if it be true, that our Senſes reach not ſo far as the Subſtance, but perceive only the Accidents: all that theſe Faculties learn us of the Euchariſt, is, That this Sacrament ſtill retains the Accidents of Bread and Wine; which is a true Notion, and contains nothing contrary to our belief. Should we ſay, moreover, with thoſe who make the ſecond Anſwer, That our Senſes well perceive the Subſtance, but yet in a manner indirect, and ſubject to Error and Deceit; one may truly ſay, That Tranſubſtantiation is contrary to the report of our Senſes, but not to this direct and certain report, whence ſprings this firm perſwaſion, called Experimental Knowledg. It will be only contrary to this indirect and uncertain Report, which can only eſtabliſh a tottering Opinion, which is almoſt as often falſe as true.

This being granted, you cannot reeſtabliſh your Proofs, unleſs you diſtinctly maintain theſe three things.

Firſt, That the Senſes do perceive the very Subſtance it ſelf, either directly or indirectly; however, with certainty.

The ſecond, That this Certainty which our Senſes give us touching the Subſtances, is greater than that of the Facts, whence are drawn the Proofs of Chriſtianity.

The third, That this Certainty is the ground of theſe Proofs; and that they cannot ſubſiſt, if our Senſes may be deceived in the diſcerning of theſe kind of Objects.

'Twould be an eaſy matter for me, ſaid I to him, to maintain this againſt all oppoſition. But others

(a) *See the Treatise of the Authority of the Senses.*

(a) having already done it; and this Diſcuſſion being likely to engage us into difficult Enquiries, and the force of my Arguments not depending thereon, I therefore am willing to wave that diſpute, and betake my ſelf to what is ſo evident and undeniable, as I am ſure muſt ſatisfy you.

Will you not grant me, Sir, That we do every day diſcern one Subſtance from another? Will you not grant me, for Example, that I now diſtinguiſh whatever is in this Chamber, and that I can truly ſay, *This is a Table, this is a Book, this is a Bed, this a Chair.* I do not ſay there's certainty in theſe Judgments I make. I do not determine which is the Faculty which makes me do it. I only ſay, I do do it. Can you deny me this to be true, or ſhall I ſet about the proving of it?

No, anſwer'd he. A Man muſt be void of Senſe that requires it. Will you then in the ſecond place deny me, purſued I, that I make this judgment by ſome of the Faculties which God has given me; I mean thoſe Faculties purely natural, which are common to all Men, and perform their Functions without any ſupernatural aſſiſtance, internal or external, without any external Revelation, without any inward illumination of the Spirit?

I am far from denying it, anſwered he, and I am perſwaded, there's no Catholick that queſtions it. This, ſaid I, is enough, and I need no more for the ſubſiſtence of my Proofs.

And to convince you of what I ſay, I ſhall bring them to this Head; I ſhall retrench whatever you diſlike in them, and inſtead of the Senſes which trouble you, I ſhall only ſpeak of that natural Faculty which makes us diſtinguiſh one Subſtance from another. You'l ſee they will keep all their ſtrength, and be

be wholly ſheltred from your Diſtinctions.

I begin with the ſecond; There being ſome neceſſity for it. It conſiſted of theſe three Propoſitions.

1. *If Tranſubſtantiation has place, our Senſes deceive us in the report they make of the Euchariſt.*

2. *If our Senſes deceive us in the report which they make of the Euchariſt, they may as well deceive us in every thing elſe.*

3. *If our Senſes may deceive us in every thing, the Proofs of Chriſtianity are of no ſolidity.*

This is the ſum of my Second Proof which I offered you yeſterday.

Now be pleas'd to obſerve how I further expreſs it.

1. If Tranſubſtantiation has place, the natural Faculty which God has given us, whereby to diſtinguiſh one Subſtance from another, this Faculty deceives us in the notice it gives us of the *Euchariſt*.

2. If the natural Faculty whereby we diſtinguiſh one Subſtance from another, be miſtaken on the Subject of the Euchariſt, nothing hinders but that it may be the ſame on other Subſtances.

3. If the natural Faculty, whereby we diſcern the Subſtances, has no certainty, the Proofs for Chriſtian Religion be of no weight.

You ſee, Sir, that forming my Argument in this manner, your Diſtinctions are beſide the purpoſe, and altogether fruitleſs. Wherefore you cannot defend your ſelf but in denying ſome of the Propoſitions of which it conſiſts; but which of the three can you deny? Not the firſt, I ſuppoſe; For, in fine, if Tranſubſtantiation has place, The Sacrament of the Euchariſt is not Bread nor Wine, but our Saviour's proper Body and Blood. Yet the natural Faculty whereby we diſcern the Subſtances from one another, whatever that is, and

what-

whatever name we give it, this Faculty tells us, that 'tis not the Body and Blood of Chriſt, but Bread and Wine.

If you doubt of this; ſhew this Sacrament to a Man indued only with thoſe Faculties which Nature has given us, and who has never received any ſupernatural aſſiſtance, to a *Jew*, or to a *Mahometan* or Pagan: Ask him what it is, and you'l ſee how little he will heſitate to anſwer you, it's Bread and Wine.

If you ſtill doubt of this, deſire a Prieſt to mix a conſecrated Hoſt amongſt others unconſecrated; Employ then all your natural Faculties to diſtinguiſh that which is the Body of Chriſt from the reſt, which is mere Bread; You'l find all your care here to no purpoſe.

It's then certain, that the natural Faculty, whereby we diſcern Subſtances, affirms plainly the Euchariſt to be Bread and Wine, and therefore deceives us, if your Belief be true. Thus my firſt Propoſition labours under no difficulty. And the ſecond is no leſs certain than the firſt. For, in fine, if the natural Faculty, whereby we diſtinguiſh one Subſtance from another, may take the Body of Chriſt for Bread and Wine, there will be no deceit, of which 'twill not be capable, there being nothing in the World more diſcernable, and ſubject to leſs miſtakes, than an human Body on one hand, and a morſel of Bread, and ſome drops of Wine on the other.

I have only then to prove my third Propoſition, which is in effect the only one, which appears to have need. Yet is it certain, I ſhall have little trouble to make you agree with me in it. It ſaith, That the certainty with accompanies the Acts of the natural Faculty, and makes us diſtinguiſh the Subſtances; That this Certitude, I ſay, is the Foundation of the

the Proofs of Chriſtianity, and that we cannot ſolidly eſtabliſh the truth of this Holy Religion, if the Senſes may deceive us in the reports they make of theſe kind of Objects.

I conceive nothing more certain than this Propoſition. In effect, we agreed in our *firſt Conference*, That the Proofs of Chriſtian Religion depends on the Truth of certain Facts, which we never ſaw, but which are atteſted to us by Perſons whoſe Teſtimony ought not to be ſuſpected by us. Yet it will reaſonably be ſo, if we be not in a capacity to diſcern certainly particular Subſtances. And this will clearly appear, if we run through the moſt important of theſe Facts.

The moſt conſiderable, and the moſt deciſive, is without difficulty, being our Saviour's Reſurrection; for the whole depends hereon. If this Fact be falſe, the Goſpel is but a mere Romance; and if it be true, it cannot be deni'd but God has declar'd himſelf hereby in the moſt authentic manner in the World, in favour of our Holy Religion. And the Apoſtles were chiefly ſent to atteſt the Truth of this Fact; and hence it is, That they ſo often ſeem to affect (as it were) the title of *Witneſſes* of their Maſter's *Reſurrection*.

But 'tis very conſiderable, That the Apoſtles were not preſent at our Lord's Reſurrection. He was not in the Sepulchre when theſe holy Men arrived there; and they found only the Funeral Linen wherewith his Body was wrapped. They knew not then our Saviour was riſen, by ſeeing him come out of the Tomb, and as they beheld *Lazarus*; but they gathered it from two other Facts, of which they were certain, having already ſeen the firſt, and ſeeing then actually the ſecond. The one was his Death, and the other his Life. They were ſure our Lord had expired on the Croſs; That his

Side

Side was pierced with a Spear, that they might be certain of his Death. They knew that he was buried, and consequently could not have the least suspicion that he was not really dead. They saw him afterwards alive, and walking, acting, and speaking, whence they concluded in the clearest manner in the World, and the least liable to mistake, that he was effectually risen.

It's then plain, that the Truth of Christ's Resurrection depends on one hand, in knowing whether he died; and on the other, whether he liv'd after his Death. But what certainty can there be of either of these two Facts, if there be none in the judgment we make of Substances? These two Facts are equally contested. The *Basilidians* denied heretofore the first, and the *Mahometans* deny it to this day, both affirming, 'twas not our Saviour Christ, but *Simon* the *Cyrenian* that was crucified by the Jews. The Jews have ever denied the second. They say, it's very true, our Saviour died on the Cross, but that he never rose again, and that what the Apostles related of it, was a mere Fable.

If we may be deceived in these kind of Objects, what can we oppose to either of these Enemies of the Truth? How shall we convince either the *Basilidians*, or *Mahometans*, That it was *Jesus*, and not *Simon* who expired on the Cross? How shall we perswade the Jews the Apostles were not deceived in imagining they saw him alive and risen? Will not both one and the other have grounds to tell us we have no certainty for what we affirm? The *Turks* will tell us, That seeing we may be so easily deceived in the discerning of Substances, it's very likely the Jews took *Simon* for Jesus Christ. The *Jews* will answer, the Error was not theirs, but that the Apostles took some Spirit, or living Man, for their

Maſter. And as to us, we have nothing convincing to oppoſe againſt one or the other.

And here, Sir, let me entreat you to conſider the imprudence of *Bellarmine*. Amongſt other Reaſons, he uſes to ſhew the Senſes have no certainty, when the Queſtion is about diſcerning the Subſtances; he particularly cites *(b)* the Inſtance of *Mary Magdalen*, who took our Saviour riſen for the Gardiner. I ſhall not ſtand to ſhew here the weakneſs of this Argument, nor ſay 'twas ſcarcely then light when *Mary* came into the Garden where our Saviour was buried. Neither ſhall I uſe long Diſcourſes to prove, That her trouble, grief, or perhaps modeſty, would not let her look directly on a Man whom ſhe did not know.

(b) Bell. de Euch. lib. 3. cap. 24.

But that which I would entreat you to conſider, is, the ſtroak which this Argument of *Bellarmine* might give to the certainty of our Faith, were it as ſolid as he pretends it to be. It proves nothing, or it proves one might take our Saviour riſen for another Man; and conſequently, that one might take another Man for Jeſus Chriſt riſen; and ſo when the Apoſtles ſaw our Lord riſen, they were not aſſured 'twas he; ſo that having no greater certainty than theſe Holy Men, we have reaſon to doubt of this great Miracle, which is the principal prop of our Faith.

And theſe are the natural Conſequences of *Bellarmin*'s Argument. I muſt acknowledg there's no great reaſon to fear this ſhould meet with belief in Mens Minds. In effect you may, as long as you pleaſe, maintain, we may be miſtaken in the diſcerning of Subſtances. You will not find any Body that will be perſwaded of ſo abſurd a Paradox. All the World will believe their Sight; and I am of Opinion, whatever you may ſay, That you little doubt but 'tis I that have the honour of converſing

with you now; and I desire no other Judg but your own Conscience, would you please to let it speak your sense in this Matter. But though there be no danger of falling into *Bellarmin*'s Opinion in this Point, and admitting all the Consequences of the Principles which he establishes, yet is it plain 'tis not long of him we do not do it, and hereby doubt of our Saviour's Resurrection, as well as of a thousand other important Matters, were his Answers and Arguments as solid as he would have him thought to be.

Moreover, what I now said of our Saviour's Resurrection, is applicable to all other Resurrections which have been wrought, either by our Lord himself, or his Apostles. The truth of this Miracle, and the force of the Proof drawn thence, depend on the knowing whether those who were seen alive, were really those who were dead a while before. But the means of knowing it is, whether any of our Faculties do precisely determine concerning Substances, and whether it be an easy and common thing for them to be deceived?

When our Lord cured the Man born blind, the Pharisees who found themselves so perplexed with the Proof which was drawn thence in favour of the Truth, might easily clear themselves of it, by supposing your Maxims. They needed only to have said, *That he who saw, and vaunted of the recovery of his Sight, was not the Person who was blind a while before, but rather an Impostor, whom our Saviour had set up; and though it seem'd to those who had known him, that he was the same Person, yet 'twas not to be believed, seeing our Senses have not the least shadow of certainty in the discerning of particular Substances.* When our Saviour multiplied the Bread to feed the multitude which followed him, we may doubt of the Truth of this Miracle, if we may believe what

what this Multitude eat was not Bread; and we may doubt that it was Bread, if we have not any Faculty to make us diſtinguiſh one thing from another. When our Lord walked on the Sea, he wrought, without doubt, a ſignal Miracle. But this Miracle ſignifies nothing, unleſs we be aſſured it was on the Water, and not on a Plain that our Saviour walked: of which we may doubt, if we have not Faculties to diſcern certainly theſe Objects.

All the Miracles which have ſerved only to transform Subſtances, may be called into queſtion if your Opinion be allowed. For if our Senſes tell us nothing certain touching Subſtances; how ſhall we know there was ever made any real change: And to what purpoſe was the changing of *Moſes* his Rod, to perſwade, either this Prophet to accept of the Calling God had offered him, or *Pharaoh* to let the Children of *Iſrael* go? To what purpoſe was the changing of the Waters of the River of *Nile* into Blood, or that of *Cana* into Wine, if thoſe who ſaw all theſe Converſions, might doubt whether they were true, and whether they had any other place but in their abuſed Fancies?

The Prophecies are alſo another great ſource of Proofs to eſtabliſh the Truth of Chriſtian Religion. Yet 'tis certain, that Prophecies prove nothing but by the conformity which they have with the Events. But what certainty can we have of Events, if we may be deceived in the diſcerning of Subſtances? The Perſon of Jeſus Chriſt, that of his Holy Mother, his Apoſtles, his Croſs, his Sepulchre, the People whom he converted, the Sick he healed, the Dead he raiſed up, and an hundred other things which the Prophets foretold, were Subſtances. Whence it follows, if thoſe who have ſeen all theſe things

may have been deceived, there remains to us no more certainty touching the accompliſhment of the Ancient Oracles: and this great Proof of the Divinity of Chriſtianity, which gives ſuch Perplexity to the Infidels, and ſuch great Conſolation to the Faithful, will be no more of any weight.

I told you Yeſterday, that one of the ſtrongeſt Proofs of Chriſtian Religion, is the Truth of the *Jewiſh* Religion; and that all the Miracles which authoriz'd the Vocation of *Moſes*, do highly eſtabliſh that of our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. But is it not true, that almoſt all that God did to give credit and authority to this Prophet, would have been fruitleſs, if thoſe who were the Spectators might been deceived in the Queſtion of Subſtances?

(c) Diſc. &c. pag. 123.

The Author of the Diſcourſe touching the Proofs of the Books of *Moſes* (c) affirms, That 'tis to attribute to all the People of the *Jews*, the greateſt extravagancy to believe they may have been deceived in theſe Matters. *It's clear*, ſays he, *that we muſt ſuppoſe all theſe People mad and beſides themſelves, to ſay, they thought to paſs through the Red Sea dry-ſhod, when 'twas no ſuch matter; in thinking they beheld a Mountain on fire, when they ſaw no ſuch thing; That they fed on Manna, when they had nothing but common Food; in believing their Cloaths were not worn out, altho they were obliged oftentimes to change them; in their believing to have ſeen* Moſes *ſtrike the Rock, whence flowed Water ſufficient to ſatisfy the thirſt of ſix hundred thouſand Men, when in truth there was no ſuch thing.*

But it's plain all this might happen, altho this People conſiſted only of wiſe and intelligent Perſons; if it be true, there's no certainty in the diſtinction we make of Subſtances, ſeeing that the Sea, the Mountain of *Sinai*, the

the Fire which covered it, the Manna, the Jews Garments, the Rock, and the Waters which flowed thence, were ſomething more than Accidents.

This Author cannot comprehend there could be ſo general an Error, and that it could infect ſix hundred thouſand Men capable of bearing Arms. But that wherein one falls on the Subject of the Euchariſt, ſuppoſing this Sacrament not to be Bread and Wine, will be more general, ſeeing 'twill be common to all Mankind without exception.

It's then clear, Sir, that the Truth of the Facts, which eſtabliſh the Divinity of the Chriſtian Religion, depends on the Certitude, whereby we diſtinguiſh the Subſtances from one another. But this being granted, my *ſecond Proof* ſubſiſts and has its effect; if not in the ſame form I gave it Yeſterday, yet at leaſt in that I now give it. However this concerns me but little; and provided I obtain what I demand, I ſhall be willing it ſhould be in the manner you pleaſe: whether it be the Senſes, or the rational Faculty, or what other Faculty you will, which makes us diſtinguiſh the Subſtances, all this is indifferent to me, provided you grant me, That 'tis the ſame Faculty which diſcerns that which makes us become Chriſtians. This being granted, 'twill be undeniable, that this Faculty cannot be accuſed of deceiving us in what ſhe tells us of the Euchariſt, without taking from it whatever it has of Certainty and Authority in the Facts which ſerve for a Foundation to Faith.

Here's then my *ſecond Proof* perfectly reeſtabliſh'd, I ſhall now do the ſame thing for the *firſt*. I drew it hence, That the Certainty of the Senſes being incomparably greater than that we call *Moral*; ſhould it be granted that Tranſubſtantiation was one of the Doctrines which Chriſtianity obliges us to believe, the Objections

which

which might be made againſt this Holy Religion would have more ſtrength than the Proofs which eſtabliſh the Divinity of it, becauſe that in effect theſe Proofs have only a moral Evidence; whereas the Objections which may be offered againſt this Holy Religion, might have the Evidence of all the Senſes, which clearly witneſs againſt Tranſubſtantiation. You do not grant me this laſt Propoſition; you affirm 'tis not the Senſes, but Reaſon, which ſays, the Euchariſt is Bread and Wine, becauſe you pretend there's only this laſt Faculty in a condition to diſcern the Subſtances; and that ſhould the Senſes give ſome Indication, they would do it in a manner equally doubtful and indirect. I have already declared my unwillingneſs to enter into all theſe Diſcuſſions; for whatever the Faculty is which makes us diſcern, whether the Subſtances in general, or that of the Euchariſt in particular, it's ſufficient it is a natural Faculty. In this Suppoſition I thus reeſtabliſh my *firſt Proof.*

The certainty which accompanies the Functions of the natural Faculty, which makes us diſcern one Subſtance from another, is greater than that we call *Moral.* If then this Faculty tells us the Euchariſt is Bread and Wine, as it muſt be granted it does, one may offer againſt Tranſubſtantiation, and conſequently againſt Chriſtianity, allowing Tranſubſtantiation to be one of its Doctrines; one may, I ſay, offer againſt it, a greater certitude than that of the Proofs which eſtabliſh the Divinity of it, whereby 'twill be more rational to reject than embrace it.

This Conſequence is neceſſary, and whatever paſt in our firſt Conference, does invincibly prove it. So that I only need to eſtabliſh the Principle whence I draw it, *viz.* That the certainty whereby we commonly diſcern the Subſtances from one another, is greater than

that

that we call *Moral.* And this is all you can deſire of me; and if I convince you, I expect from your juſtice no further contentions about it.

It's then eaſy to make you acknowledg this. Be pleaſed then to conſider, that when we are only morally aſſured of a thing, the certainty we have of it, is not comparable to that which thoſe have, on whoſe Teſtimony it's believed. For Example, I am only morally aſſured of *Ceſar*'s Victories, and *Alexander*'s Conqueſt. But the Souldiers which ſerv'd under theſe two Captains, and were in their Armies, and ſhared with them in their Labours; theſe Souldiers, I ſay, were far more certain of them than I am, yea, more than the Hiſtorians themſelves to whom they related them, and on whoſe Teſtimony I believe them.

I am only morally certain of the being of the Cities of *Jeruſalem, Rome,* and *Conſtantinople,* having never been in thoſe Places. But thoſe that have been, and lived there, thoſe are far more certain of it than I can be, becauſe in effect they have ſeen theſe Cities with their own eyes.

You gave me the Reaſon of this in our firſt Conference; tho indeed you made the Application of it to the certainty of the Senſes. But it not being the Application which makes the ſolidity of it, 'twill be ſtill as ſtrong, whatever uſe is made of it. You tell me we know the things of which we have, that which we call a *moral certainty,* only becauſe they are atteſted to us by Perſons whom we have no cauſe to ſuſpect, and who tells us they have ſeen them with their own Eyes. But tho theſe Perſons be not in any ſort ſuſpected by us, we are far from being ſo aſſured of the truth of their Teſtimony, as we are from the Reports of our Senſes. it's impoſſible for us to doubt we ſee, what we do ſee; but it's not impoſſible for us to doubt, whether others have

have ſeen what they tell us. We ſee, in this reſpect, the bottom of our own Hearts, but we ſee not all that paſſes in the Hearts of others. We have great Reaſons to believe they do not deceive us; but theſe Reaſons have not the evidence which accompanies this inward ſenſe of our own Actions, which is commonly called *Conſcience*.

You made me obſerve, in the *ſecond place*, that our Senſes do not atteſt to us the truth of things of which we have no other Certitude than that we call Moral; whereas we may eaſily have a Moral Certainty of moſt things which are atteſted to us by our proper Senſes. My Senſes, for example, do not inform me there's a City call'd *Rome*; wherefore I have no other than a moral Certainty of it. But I do not only know by my own Senſes, there is a City call'd *Paris*, I know it moreover, by thoſe of others, who ſee, and have ſeen it a thouſand times: ſo that I have a double Certainty of the being of this Town, the moral one, and that of Senſe. By conſequence, as two is more than one; ſo that Certainty which is merely Moral, is neceſſarily inferior to that of the Senſes. Suppoſe, we now, they are not our Senſes, but ſome other Faculty, which makes us immediatly diſcern things; yet this will not hinder us from ſaying ſtill, That thoſe who are aſſured of the Exiſtence of any thing, by the reports of this Faculty, whatever it be, have greater certainty of it, than thoſe who know it only from the Teſtimony of thoſe who have informed themſelves by themſelves, and from the exerciſe of their own proper Faculties. So that take it how we will, it is clear, that when we are aſſured only morally of a thing, we are much leſs than thoſe on the Teſtimony of whom it is believed: Or to ſpeak better, it is plain, that the moral Certainty do's ſtill ſuppoſe another greater in thoſe whoſe Authority is its Prop and Foundation.

If

If I then ſhew you, one may have this kind of Certitude term'd moral, touching Subſtances, which are no longer, or are now in diſtant parts, and where we have never been; but I do not ſay enough, if I ſhew you we may have the higheſt degree of this kind of certainty, ſhall I not hereby convince you, That the moral Certainty is always inferior to that which attends the Functions of the natural Faculty, which diſcovers to us the difference of Subſtances? If I do this, Sir, will you not be ſatisfied?

I ſhall be fully ſo, anſwered he; and I promiſe you, that if you prove it me clearly, I ſhall not trouble my ſelf nor you with a Reply.

I can eaſily do it, ſaid I; For is it not true, that when any one would make us conceive a moral Certainty in the higheſt Point of its Perfection, the commoneſt Examples which are produced, are thoſe of the Exiſtence of the City of *Rome*, to thoſe who have never been there; that of the Pope, Grand Signior, or Emperor, to thoſe that have never ſeen them; and as to the paſt, that of *Alexander* the Great, *Ceſar*, *Pompey*, and other Hero's of Antiquity. Scarcely any Author that treats of this Subject, but alledges one or the other of theſe Inſtances: Yet the City of *Rome* is a Subſtance, or to ſpeak more exactly, an heap of Subſtances of ſeveral kinds. *Alexander*, *Cæſar*, *Pompey*, and all the reſt of the ancient Hero's, were ſomething more than Accidents. And conſequently, had not God given us a Faculty capable of diſcerning the Subſtances with certainty, there would be no aſſurance from the Teſtimony of thoſe who have ſeen this; and inſtead of a moral Certainty, the greateſt which can be imagin'd, we ſhould only have a ſlight Opinion, and without Foundation.

Is it not true, Sir, that we are morally aſſured there was heretofore at *Rhodes* a great Coloſſus of Braſs;

that there was a ſtately Temple at *Epheſus*, conſecrated to *Diana*, and at *Rome* another dedicated to *Jupiter*? Have we not the like certainty? that there are ſtill Pyramids of Stone in *Egypt* of exceſſive heights; that there's a Mount in *Sicily* which vomits Fire; that there are Elephants in the *Indies*, Lions in *Africk*, Crocodiles in the *Nile*? Yet this Coloſſus, theſe Temples, Pyramids, Mountain, Lions and Crocodils, what are theſe but Subſtances, whoſe Exiſtence is not known to us but by the Teſtimony of thoſe who have ſeen them with their own Eyes; or, to ſay nothing which may move you, who perceived them by means of the Faculty which God has given us to know theſe kind of Objects? But not to go ſo far, I now ſhew'd you, that the Truth of the Facts, whence are taken the Proofs which eſtabliſh the Divinity of the Chriſtian Religion, and even of the Jewiſh, depends on the faithfulneſs of the Report, which this natural Faculty has made of ſeveral Subſtances; and that if this Faculty may be herein miſtaken, theſe Proofs are in no wiſe convincing. It being then certain, that we are morally aſſured of the Truth of theſe Facts, it cannot be denied we have a moral Certainty of ſeveral Subſtances, and that thoſe who were inform'd of them by themſelves, have a greater certainty than we.

Can you, Sir, now doubt, I have not made good my word? Will you not grant me, that the diſcerning of Subſtances, whatever the Faculty is whereby this is done, is attended with a greater certainty than the moral one? Thus this Faculty telling me the Euchariſt is Bread and Wine, and telling it me with all the force and conſtancy it is able; is it not apparent there's a clearneſs in its Evidence far greater than that in the Proofs of Chriſtianity? Do's not my Proof then return with its full ſtrength and convictions? May I not always ſay,

That

That Tranſubſtantiation is oppoſed with greater ſtrength of Argument, than the Chriſtian Religion is defended with?

We are agreed, that the Proofs for Chriſtianity have only a moral Evidence; and I now ſhewed you, That that which perſwades us the Euchariſt is Bread and Wine, is far more certain than what is morally ſo. Can you, after this, deny that there is not greater certainty in what combats Tranſubſtantiation, than in what eſtabliſhes the Truth of *Chriſtian* Religion? Can you deny that that which is more than ſufficient to eſtabliſh the Truth of Chriſtian Religion, diſcharged of Tranſubſtantiation, is too weak to maintain it, granting Tranſubſtantiation to be one of the Doctrines which ſhe requires to be believed?

You ſee then, Sir, the fruitleſſneſs of your Anſwer; you ſee it lets my two Proofs ſubſiſt in their full ſtrength; you ſee, that whether it be the Senſes or Reaſon which make us know and diſcern the Subſtances, we have ſtill cauſe to believe the Euchariſt is Bread and Wine; and that this Perſwaſion cannot be rendred doubtful and uncertain, without ſhaking the whole Foundation of Chriſtianity, and without giving the Infidels an infallible means of triumphing over this Holy Religion.

Mr. *N.* was about forming an Anſwer, when he was hindred by the arrival of one of my Friends who came from a long Voyage, and whoſe return was a ſurprize to me: I was much joyed to ſee him. But Mr. *N.* to whom he was a Stranger, took hence an occaſion to be gone, without informing me of his thoughts on what I told him.

CONFERENCE IV.

The Third Proof, That Tranſubſtantiation eſtabliſhes Scepticiſm in its full perfection; and eſpecially deſtroys the certainty of Demonſtration.

I Was very deſirous to know what effect my laſt conference had on Mr. *N.* I was moreover willing to ſhew him my third Proof: Whereupon I went to his Houſe, where he received me with his uſual civility; and our Diſcourſe having inſenſibly led us to Matters of Religion, I took the liberty to ask him, Whether he had throughly conſidered what had paſt in our foregoing Debates?

He hereupon ingenuouſly acknowledg'd, He could find no means to defend againſt my Inſtances the Anſwer he had made me, nor how to offer me better. Yet he added, he was ſo perſwaded of the truth of his Belief, That he would rather yield up to me Mr. *Huet*'s Proofs, than to imagin the whole Church could be deceived in ſo important a Matter as that of the Sacrament. In effect, ſaid he to me, What hurt can there be in ſaying, this Author has ill defended a good Cauſe, and made uſe of falſe reaſonings for the maintaining of the Truth? What do you ſay, Sir? ſaid I; you ask me, What hurt there can be in what you ſay? I affirm to you, that nothing can be worſe. For, Sir, I would not have you miſtaken, Mr. *Huet*'s Proofs are not of his invention: he only digeſted them into order, ſtrengthened and illuſtrated them with curious Remarks and preſſing Conſiderations: and as to the main of them, he has taken them out of Authors that have wrote on that Subject before

before him: and indeed he has alſo commendably taken them from the diſcourſes of the Prophets, and the Son of God himſelf, and his Apoſtles.

Chriſt himſelf is the firſt that has uſed theſe Proofs. He ſeveral times alledg'd the Predictions of the Prophets; and as oft did cite his Miracles. He alledg'd his *Reſurrection*; and theſe were his ſtrongeſt Arms his greateſt Arguments. He made uſe of them to ſtop the mouths of the Scribes and Phariſees, whom he look'd upon as his profeſt Enemies. He uſed them to perſwade the multitudes which follow'd him; and who hereby in ſome ſort ſhew'd their readineſs to receive his Doctrine. *Believe me (a) for my Works*, ſaid he to them. And in another place *(b), The Works which I do, bear teſtimony of me.*

(a) John xiv.
(b) St. John v. 36.

He uſed them to confirm the Faith of his Diſciples, and oppoſes this alone to the Temptations which ſhook them. *(c) O fools, and ſlow of heart, to believe all that the Prophets have ſpoken. Ought not Chriſt to have ſuffered theſe things, and to enter into his Glory?* Then ſays St. *Luke*, *beginning at Moſes and all the Prophets, he expounded to them in all the Scriptures, the things concerning himſelf.* And when St. *John* the *Baptiſt* ſent to him his Diſciples to demand of him, whether he was the *Meſſias?* he gave them for his full anſwer theſe words, *(d) Go and tell John what you ſee and hear. The Blind recover their ſight, the Lame walk, the Lepers are cleans'd, the Deaf hear, the Dead are riſen, and the Goſpel is preached to the Poor.*

(c) Luke 24. 25, 26, 27.
(d) Mat. xi. 4, 5.

The Apoſtles have herein imitated their Maſter as well as in other things; one of them declaring, at the end of his Goſpel *(e)* That he wrote the Miracles of the Son of God, that *we might believe that Jeſus is the the Chriſt, the Son of God; and that believing we might have Life through his Name.* The Fathers have followed

(e) John xx.

theſe.

theſe incomparable Guides. The modern Authors have trod in their ſteps. Ask me now, Sir, then no more what hurt there is in ſaying, Mr. *Huet*'s Proofs be of no weight. I dare ſay they be not only valid, but that he can not be a *Chriſtian* who naturally denies them.

Your Anſwer is alſo attended with this Vexation, that 'tis equally injurious to the Wiſdom of God, and to the Memory of thoſe who have hitherto embraced the Profeſſion of the Truth. For as to the firſt, if the accompliſhment of the ancient Prophecies, the Miracles of our Saviour and his Apoſtles, do prove nothing, Wherefore did God take that care to perform them? And whom will you perſwade that he rais'd up ſuch a long train of Prophets, ſo many times forced Nature, and overthrew the ancienteſt and firmeſt of its Laws; and that he did all this, I ſay, for nothing, without any Neceſſity, any Rea- or Profit? Is this the Character of the Divine Wiſdom, which commonly arriving at the greateſt Ends, by the ſmalleſt and moſt contemptible Means in appearance, muſt needs be far from uſing ſuch great ones, and ſetting at work ſuch Machins to do nothing?

I ſay, moreover, that your Anſwer is injurious to an infinite number of Chriſtians. How many have there been ſince the Birth of Chriſtianity who have embraced this Holy Religion, by being convinc'd of its truth by proofs of the ſame nature of Mr. *Huet*'s? I mean, by the conſideration of the Prophecies of the Old and New Teſtament, and the Miracles of Chriſt and his Apoſtles. If what you ſay be true, they have been ſimple and fooliſh People, who have yielded to ſuch things as they ought to have deſpiſed. Their Faith was not a ſolid Perſwaſion, but a fond Belief, more worthy of blame, than praiſe; and thus lightly believing, they have ſhew'd themſelves of the number of thoſe mention'd by the Son of *Sirach*. *Qui citò credunt leves ſunt corde.* And

And further; If Miracles be of no value, why do you require them of us? Why will you have our firſt Reformers rejected for this very Reaſon? Why do you reject People, and reject them without hearing them, as they think they ought to be; and that for this only reaſon, that they wanted an unneceſſary thing, and a Proof which concludes nothing? Is not this, I appeal to your ſelf, very ſtrange?

In a word, Sir, if Mr. *Huet*'s Proofs be not good, where ſhall we find better? What can we ſay to the *Infidels*, to bring them to the knowledg of the Truth? And with what ſucceſs ſhall we labour for their converſion?

We ſhall not want Proofs, nor Means, ſaid Mr. *N.* we ſhall have the Proofs of Reaſon, taken from the nature of the Chriſtian Doctrine it ſelf, the Truth, Sublimity and Purity of its Precepts; and from the conformity it has with the common notions which the corruption of our Nature has left us, and ſome other ſuch like Conſiderations, which do not depend on Arguments of Senſe.

Who has told you, Sir, replied I, that theſe kind of Proofs are proper to convert all ſorts of Infidels, without exception? Can you deny what even thoſe who would make the beſt of them, have expreſly remark'd *(f)*, That they are a little abſtracted, and require not only ſome application of Mind, but moreover greater light and penetration of thought than the Vulgar is commonly endued with? Yet we muſt convert the *Laplanders*, the wild *Iriſh*, and *Cannibals*, which is to ſay, brutiſh People, and ſuch about whom it has been diſputed in the Schools of *Spain*, whether they have the uſe of Reaſon, and whether they be of the ſame kind with other Men. What way then have you for the inſtructing them in things which ſurpaſs the Capacity of our Tradeſmen and Peaſants? But what will you ſay, if I ſhew you, That your Tranſubſtantiation deſtroys theſe kind of Proofs;

(f) *Chriſtian Converſ.*

as

as well as Mr. *Huet*'s? Will you not grant me after this, that this is a very dangerous Doctrine, and that you cannot ſoon enough retrench it from the number of thoſe Truths which are taught by Chriſtianity? Yet I can eſtabliſh more than this; For I can ſhew, that your Belief baniſhes Certainty from the Acts of Reaſon, as well as from thoſe of Senſe. I can ſhew you it ſets open a large Door to *Pyrrhoniſm*, whereby it may abſolutely reign in the World, there being nothing which can be reaſonably oppoſed againſt it.

You ſee, Sir, 'tis impoſſible to ſay any thing of greater force againſt your Doctrine. For Scepticiſm, is the laſt and greateſt irregularity, whereinto Reaſon can throw it ſelf; All others appear to me ſlight in compariſon of this. And ſo much the rather, becauſe all others may be cured; whereas this is without remedy. In effect, the *Sceptics* doubting of every thing, and agreeing in nothing, they give no hold to thoſe whoſe who would reduce them. So that 'tis impoſſible to diſpute regularly with them. For as Motion cannot be made but upon ſomething that's immovable; ſo a Diſpute muſt turn on ſomething which is indiſputable. What way is there then to diſpute againſt a Man who doubts of all; and not only doubts, whether what you tell him be true, but doubts moreover whether you do tell him of it; whether he hears it, yea whether he doubts of it? As for my part, I regard all the reaſonings of thoſe who undertake to convince *Sceptics*, as a perpetual begging of the Queſtion. For, in fine, 'tis impoſſible to reaſon againſt them, without laying down ſomething which they will not grant; becauſe that in effect, theſe People agreeing in nothing, and it being in the mean time impoſſible to reaſon, without laying down ſomething, it's clear there's no reaſoning againſt them, without granting what's in queſtion, which is one of the greateſt faults a Man that argues can fall into. It's

It's then impoſſible fairly to deny what I ſaid, when I affirm'd, That *Tranſubſtantiation* opens a door to Scepticiſm; and puts men into a neceſſity of denying every thing. What I ſaid at firſt, is a ſmall matter; that it makes void Mr. *Huet*'s proofs; it ſpares none, overthrowing generally, and without exception, whatever eſtabliſhes the truth of Chriſtian Religion. So that if I juſtifie this, as I am perſwaded I eaſily can, I ſhall be ſorry to add any thing to the proof, which this alone furniſhes me with. In effect thoſe who ſhall be capable of digeſting this, may digeſt every thing.

I believe you are in the right, ſaid Mr. *N.* and I do acknowledg, if you can convince me *Tranſubſtantiation* draws along with it Scepticiſm, you will make me ſuſpect it. In effect I conceive nothing more dangerous, nor at the ſame time ſo ridiculous as Scepticiſm; and you can never ſpeak any thing too bad of it, which I will not ſubſcribe to. But I do not much fear your proving what you talk of.

And I for my part, ſaid I, do not doubt, but I ſhall do it. Shall I not do it, if I convince you, that in admitting *Tranſubſtantiation* one is engaged not to rely on any evidence, be it of what kind it will. For in ſhort, Sir, you know the whole diſpute with the Sceptics, is to know, Whether there be any thing certain. The Sceptics abſolutely deny this. We, as to our parts, affirm, That as there are things doubtful, and uncertain; ſo there are ſome we are ſure of, and which one may and ought to believe; and when we be asked, what thoſe things be? we anſwer, they are preciſely thoſe which are evident. Becauſe that in effect, according to us, the evidence of a thing, is the foundation of its certainty, and infallible mark of its truth. The Sceptics on the contrary ſay, that evidence and falſity have nothing in-

consistent; that they may be found together, and therefore to conclude a thing to be true, because of its being evident, is ill reasoning, and an exposing of ones self to manifest danger of being deceiv'd.

So that the whole amounts to this, Whether one may, or ought to rely on the evidence of a thing, as an infallible mark of truth? For if we cannot, the Sceptics have reason, and we can offer nothing against them. And consequently, if I shew you, that in granting *Transubstantiation*, there is no evidence of whatever rank it may be, which does not consist very well with error and falsity; Now shall I not hereby shew you, that this Doctrine draws after it the whole train of Sceptical doubts?

I suppose then a man must be a perfect Sceptic, or none at all. For the mitigations which some would introduce, be absolutely ridiculous. For in fine, we must assure our selves of whatever is evident, or assure our selves of nothing, seeing we cannot assure our selves of any thing but on the account of its evidence. And consequently, if evidence be the lawful ground of certitude, we must be sure of whatever is evident, and put away all Scepticism without reserve. On the contrary, if the evidence of a thing be not sufficient to produce a certainty of it, we can be sure of nothing; we must be perfect Sceptics, and never believe or do any thing. So that all those who are not perfect and compleat Sceptics, are not Sceptics at all, seeing they part with the fundamental maxim of their ridiculous System.

I agree with you in all this, says Mr. *N.* and will acquit you of your promise, if you show me that *Transubstantiation* separates Evidence from Truth. This is no hard matter to do, reply'd I, for in effect I know but two sorts of evidences, the one which strikes the senses, the other which is perceiv'd by the mind. I have shew'd you

you that if *Tranſubſtantiation* takes place, the firſt is a moſt unfaithful Note of the Truth. I have ſhew'd you, that amongſt this great multitude of things, which ſtrike the ſenſes, there is not perhaps one which they do more diſtinctly perceive, than the matter of the Euchariſt. I have ſhew'd you, that 'tis an object which ſhews it ſelf, not only to one or two of our ſenſes, as moſt of thoſe things do which make us apprehend them; but generally and without exception, all thoſe which God has given us. I have ſhew'd you, That they all unanimouſly do depoſe, that 'tis Bread and Wine; and that whatever precaution they uſe to hinder themſelves from being deceived, they all find the ſame thing, and never change their language. This then being a thing which you do believe to be falſe; and in effect it cannot be true, if your *Tranſubſtantiation* be receiv'd, you ſee my only task is to convince you, That according to your Principles, this firſt kind of evidence may lead us into error.

I am not agreed in that, reply'd he: For tho our ſenſes may deceive us in the Euchariſt, they deceive us only in reſpect of the ſubſtance therein contained; but will make us faithful reports on the accidents. And you know our Divines and Philoſophers confine the certainty of the ſenſes to the bare accidents: By which means, there lyes open a large field for theſe faculties to exerciſe their functions in, without running a risk of being miſtaken.

This field, ſaid I to him, is not ſo vaſt as it appears to you. Your Authors, and eſpecially *Bellarmin* *, do not pretend the ſenſes have certainty in reſpect of all ſorts of accidents, without exception. They count two different ranks, the one which are only perceiv'd by one ſenſe, as Colours by the Sight, Sounds by the Ear, Scents

* *Bell de Euch. lib. 3. cap. 24.*

by the Smell. The others which are perceiv'd by more than one ſenſe, as Greatneſs, Scituation, Figure, Motion. They call the firſt *proper Objects*, and the ſecond *common ones*. They add, that the report of our ſenſes is not certain, but only in reſpect of their proper Objects; but as to the common ones, they may eaſily be deceived. Here's then the certainty of the Senſes reduced to half the ſize you gave it. But this is not all, for *Bellarmin* ſtops not here. He moreover diſtinguiſhes the judgments we may make on the proper Objects of our Senſes in Generals, and in Particulars. For example, when we ſee a Colour, we may ſay firſt in general of it, *This is a colour, not a ſcent or ſavour*. We may ſay likewiſe in particular, *This is ſuch a colour, 'tis white or red, not green or black*. He tells us the Senſes are not certain but in the firſt of theſe judgments, they often deceiving us in the ſecond. See, Sir, whereunto this Doctrine reduces the certainty of the Senſes. For my part, I could like as well he ſhould take 'em quite away. In effect *Bellarmin* takes from the number of things of which the Senſes may give us ſome aſſurance, firſt all ſubſtances; in the ſecond place, all the accidents which are perceiv'd by more than one Senſe; in the third place, the particular deſignation of proper Objects, and he leaves them no other certain function than that of diſtinguiſhing the proper Objects of one ſenſe from thoſe of another Senſe, as Colour from Scent, and the Smell from the Sound.

Yet it happens, that all the late Philoſophers affirm, That this function, to which alone *Bellarmin* grants ſome certainty, is the moſt uncertain; or to ſpeak better, the moſt deceitful of all. They affirm, That that which we perceive by the Senſes, is commonly but one and the ſame *modus*, to wit, the figure, which when it is brought to the light, is call'd Colour; when it moves the Fibres of

of the Tongue, or Olfactory Nerves, is called Savour, or Odor; and when 'tis felt by the Hand, it takes the name of Roughneſs or Smoothneſs.

Joyn we now theſe two Opinions together, that of *Bellarmin*, and that of theſe late Philoſophers, where ſhall we be? and of what ſhall we be certain? We may now then doubt whether it be day, whether we ſit, whether you ſee me, and I you. We may doubt whether amongſt this great number of things, which inceſſantly imploy us, and which are the ties and foundations of Society, whether Civil or Eccleſiaſtic, there be one ſingle one which ſubſiſts elſewhere than in our imagination.

But 'tis not neceſſary to joyn *Bellarmin*'s opinion with that of the Modern *Philoſophers*, to find therein the entire ruin of Societies and Religion: The firſt alone is more than ſufficient to work this diſmal effect. The certainty he allows is ſo ſmall, and of ſo little uſe, either for the Chriſtian or Religious life, or the Civil, or even for the Natural and Animal one, that in loſing the certainty which we thought we had till now in the reſt, it may be ſaid we loſe all. What ſignifies the diſtinguiſhing to us of a Colour from an Odor, or Savour from a Sound? And to what uſe may all this ſerve? It more concerns us to diſtinguiſh three ſorts of objects, Perſons, Actions, and Things, underſtanding by this laſt word, all the ſubſtances which are not endued with reaſon and intelligence, as Meats, Poyſons, Remedies, Habits, Arms, Working-tools, Plants, Animals, and ſuch like things.

Theſe are ſuch things as moſt concern us to know, being things about which we are continually converſant, and whereon depends, not only the preſervation of life, and the commerce of Society, but what is more, our everlaſting Salvation.

Yet

Yet according to *Bellarmin*, nothing of all this is certain. We may be miſtaken in every thing, ſeeing all this conſiſts either in ſubſtances, or in the common Objects of our Senſes, or in proper Objects, of which we muſt have a particular knowledg; which is to ſay, in ſo many things as 'tis impoſſible to be aſſured of, if *Bellarmin* be to be believed. What confuſion, what a Chaos is this? We had as good be all blind, deaf and dumb; we had as good have had no Senſes, or that there were nothing out of us which our Senſes could perceive.

But the truth of it is, Theſe are but meer whimſies, which have no grounds. For provided we obſerve the precautions already mentioned, and which all Philoſophers agree in, our Senſes will never deceive us in any of theſe kind of Objects; we ſhall find an unequal certainty every where. Let us then judg in effect by every thing which ſerves for a foundation to the firmneſs of our perſwaſions, by the inclination we have to conceive them, by the conformity of our Sentiments with thoſe of others, and by the obſervations we have made on the truth of what we think of them, and we ſhall find a perfect equality in the reports of our Senſes, on all theſe Objects.

For to ſpeak only now to the chief part of your Anſwer, I firſt affirm, 'twill be as difficult for you to perſwade your ſelf, that what you hold in your hand, is not a Glove, but a Stone, Apple, or Sword, as to think it has no colour or ſcent; altho, according to *Bellarmin*, the firſt of theſe judgments is moſt uncertain; there being only the ſecond, wherein he will allow any certainty. And I affirm, you doubt as little of the firſt, as the ſecond; and that all the world makes the ſame judgment with you; and in fine, that there are not more inſtances to be given, which ſhew we be deceived in the diſcerning of ſubſtances, than in the general or particular judgments

ments which are made of thoſe qualities that are the proper Objects of our Senſes; ſo that we muſt grant there's certainty in all theſe things, or in none of them; whereby 'twill appear, that all theſe different reſtrictions which have ſeem'd ſo neceſſary to *Bellarmin*, are very unneceſſary and ill appli'd. This is ſo manifeſt, that I need not inſiſt any longer on it, but paſs on to the *ſecond kind* of evidence.

And *this* moreover is *double*: In effect there be certain things which are evident in themſelves, and 'tis ſufficient to comprehend them, and to know the true ſignification of the terms they are wont to be expreſſed by, to perſwade our ſelves immediately of them without any arguing. Their own proper light forces the moſt obſtinate to receive them; and tho perhaps a man may diſacknowledg them in words, yet he ſhall believe them in his heart. Such are the firſt principles of Sciences, and the reſt of thoſe certain Truths, in which all the world agree, *That one and one are two: That the whole is bigger than a part: That if we take equal numbers from equal numbers, what remains will be even.*

The *other Truths* are thoſe, which being obſcure in themſelves, and conſequently eaſily denied when propoſed without proof, become evident, when it's ſhewed they have a neceſſary and indiſſoluble tye with thoſe other Truths I have already mention'd, and whereof I have ſaid, That they gain reception by their own luſtre, which is the natural and ordinary effect of Demonſtrations.

I pretend, that *Tranſubſtantiation* does equally overthrow the certainty which ariſes from this double evidence; and I hope to ſhew you this my pretenſion is well grounded. I begin at the evidence of the ſecond rank, and ſhall make it appear, That 'tis not long of *Tranſubſtantiation*, if all Demonſtrations be not falſe; becauſe in effect there

there are an infinite number of 'em which would become ſo, were this Doctrine true.

It's firſt of all certain, That the nature and property of things, is the vaſt Field of Demonſtrations. This kind of reaſoning ſets on the proving ſometimes the Eſſence by the Properties, and ſometimes the Properties by the Eſſence; and again ſometimes an unknown or conteſted Property, by another which is more known and unqueſtionable This being granted, the only Foundation of theſe three ſorts of Demonſtrations, is the Connection of Propertie's with one another, and of all of 'em together with the Eſſence. For might one ſeparate all this, and the Eſſence could be without the Properties, or the Properties without the Eſſence, or each of theſe Properties without any one of the others, there could be no Demonſtration made on this Subject; and the Reaſonings which ſhall be uſed to prove one of theſe things by the other, would amount to no more than probable Arguments, like thoſe drawn from what they call common Accidents. And therefore the *Jeſuits* of *Conimbre* affirm *, That the Connection of Properties with their Subjects, is the true object of Sciences. They ſay this Connection is indiſſoluble, even in reference to the power of God, and they prove it by this Reaſon, That if God could ſeparate theſe things, Science might happen to be falſe; which appear'd to them abſurd and contradictory.

* Conimb. in lib. 1. poſt. Anal. cap. 7. quæſt. 2. Art. 2.

If then *Tranſubſtantiation* do's actually ſeparate the Properties from one another, and altogether from the Eſſence; if it grants ſome of theſe Properties without the others; if it grants ſome one of 'em, or all of 'em together without the Eſſence; in fine, if it grants the Eſſence without the Properties; its clear, it ſaps the Foundations of moſt Demonſtrations, and brings it to

paſs

paſs that nothing ſhall be more eaſie than to make great numbers of them, according to all the Forms and Conditions which the *Logicians* do require; yet, which ſhall be all Fallacies and Deceits.

It's certain your belief makes this great ſeparation, and your Doctors themſelves do not deny it *. For example, it's commonly believ'd that the natural properties of a Body are Extenſion, Diviſion, Motion, Impenetration, taking up a place, &c. All the Philoſophers Books are full of this kind of ſtuff. And therefore the knowledg of Phyſics, which ought chiefly to endeavour at the diſcovery of the Properties of the Natural Body, which is its Object, makes of this very thing, one of the conſiderable of its Treatiſes, and never fails to bring it after that of its Principles, which is the firſt.

* Vaſq. in 3. diſput. 187. c. 2. n. 13.

We believe 'tis the very eſſence of Accidents, to be actually in their Subject. You do not grant this; yet you grant, if this be not the eſſence of Accidents, yet 'tis at leaſt a Property of them: You believe it the Properties of Quantity, to be meaſured, to be equal, and proportionable to the place it poſſeſſes.

Here are ſeveral Properties; yet, Sir, you ſeparate them all from their Subjects; and conſequently from the eſſence whence they flow. Suppoſing, as you do, the exiſtence of the Accidents of the Bread without a Subject, you maintain ſomething that has extent, that is diviſible, moveable, figured, impenetrable, and which poſſeſſes a place, and yet this muſt not be Body all this while. Which is to ſay, you ſhall grant at once ſix different Properties of a Natural Body, ſeparated from this Body, and conſequently from its eſſence, which is yet the only ſpring from whence they flow.

Eſtabliſhing the Body of Jeſus Chriſt in the Euchariſt after the manner of Spirits, you ſtrip it of its diviſibi-

lity, its impenetrability, and its locality; which is to say, you hereby affirm the Essence to be separated from three of its most Essential Properties. Leaving to this Body its Quantity, you separate this Quantity from the several Properties, which accompany it every where else, the divisibility, impenetrability, the aptitude to be measured, to possess a place, *&c.*

Supposing the Accidents of Bread and Wine without a Subject, you do moreover suppose the Essence of these kind of Beings, without the most Essential of their Properties.

You will have Christs Body in the Eucharist to retain some of the Properties of the Natural Body, as Quantity, Figure, *&c.* And lose others, as Divisibility, Impenetrability, the manner of being circumscriptively in a place, *&c.* which is to say, you separate the Properties from one another. Hereby then you destroy the connexion of Properties between one another, and with their Essence; which as I said just now, is the foundation of most Demonstrations. So that all those which may be made on this Principle, and which *Aristotle* would have lookt upon as convincing and unanswerable proofs, are in our hands but trivial Conjectures, and bare Probabilities.

Will you have (besides this) Examples, which justifie this truth? Shall I give you Demonstrations, which all Philosophers, even your own, have ever respected as very solid ones; which yet are but meer Sophisms granting *Transubstantiation*? Is it not true, that your *Suarez* * proves there are Substances, because there are Accidents? *There are Accidents*, says he, there must then be Substances. He says this is a necessary consequence; and shews it to be so in the sequel by Considerations which perhaps I may hereafter mention. But what can be falser than this, if there can be Accidents without a Subject, as your *Transubstantiation* supposes? All

* Suarez Met. disp. 1. n. 4.

All Philoſophers both Ancient and Modern, *Ariſtotelians*, and *Carteſians* *, intending to advance further, and prove the exiſtence of Matter, or Corporal Subſtance, propoſe three things obſervable in nature. The *firſt*, that there happens in it Accidental changes, that that which was black becomes white, what was cold becomes hot; and the *ſecond*, that there happen Subſtantial changes, there being of wood made fire; and that from a Seed ſprings up a Tree; and the *third*, That all this is done by Natural Agents, whoſe forces are limited.

* *Ariſt.* Met. Lib 8. cap. 1. Perer. Phyſ. lib 5 cap 4. Suar. Met Diſp. 13. Sect. 1. Conimb. in 1. Phyſ. cap 9. Quæſt. 1. Ar. 1. Maſius ibidem Quæſt. 1. Petit de raref. & Cond. pag. 172. Rohauz Phyſ. part 1. cap 6.

Whence they conclude, There muſt be neceſſarily ſome matter which is the Subject of all theſe ſeveral changes, and on which the Natural cauſes may act. They pretend this proof is demonſtrative, and that nothing can be offered againſt it. But all this having place in the Euchariſt, it's clear there muſt be ſaid one of theſe two things, Either that this proof is not good, or that the Subſtance of the Bread and Wine remains in the Sacrament.

The *Carteſians* pretend to demonſtrate the Immortality of the Soul, by ſhewing it to be diſtinct from the Body; and they imagine to prove this diſtinction by ſaying that Thought, which is a modification of the Soul, is no Material thing. Which they afterwards prove by this reaſon, That one may deny Thought whatever appertains to the Body, as to be long, large and deep, to be of ſuch and ſuch a figure, to be diviſible, *&c.* yet without deſtroying for this the notion we have of Thought.

But can we not deny all this of the Body of Chriſt in the Euchariſt, though it be Material, and not a Spirit? Here's then another deceitful Demonſtration if your *Tranſubſtantiation* has place.

These Philosophers make great reckoning of a proof which they use against the *Vacuum* of the *Epicureans*: They affirm that to suppose a *Vacuum*, is to contradict ones self, because say they, that a *Vacuum*, if there be one, must be extensive in length, largeness and depth. But supposing it, this would be a Body; for a Body according to them, is nothing else, but that which is extended in length, largeness and depth. So that were it a Body, 'twould not be a *Vacuum*. To suppose then a *Vacuum*, is to contradict ones own Supposition. The *Cartesians* affirm nothing can oppose this proof. Yet is it false, if *Transubstantiation* be true. For there is, according to you, in the Eucharist something extensive, something that is long, large and deep, and yet not a Body.

The *Peripatetics*, says Mr. *N.* admit not of this proof, and it does not oppose the manner in which the *Cartesians* explain *Transubstantiation*; for you know they will not grant, That the Accidents of Bread and Wine subsist without a Subject.

This is true, reply'd I to him. But first the existence of Accidents without a Subject, is however opposed by a proof, which the *Cartesians* respect as demonstrative. And then the manner in which the *Cartesians* explain what you say God does in the Eucharist, ruins the most part of their Physical Demonstrations; as others have observed * before me.

*See the Treatise of the authority of the Senses.

So that you cannot deny but this Doctrine overthrows the certainty of Demonstrations. But this ought not much to surprize you, seeing your Belief overthrows the chiefest and most unquestionable of all Principles.

I was about proving this, when I was hindred by a Message from a Gentleman. I desired Mr. *N.* to permit me to write an Answer to it, who yielding to my request, our conversation was by this means interrupted for some short time.

CON-

CONFERENCE V.

Wherein is finally ſhew'd, That Tranſubſtantiation eſtabliſhes Scepticiſm; and abſolutely deſtroys the certainty of firſt Principles.

AS ſoon as I had ended my Anſwer, I rejoyn'd Mr. *N.* and reaſſumed our former Diſcourſe. You have not forgotten where we left off, ſaid I to him preſently. I had undertook to ſhew you, That Tranſubſtantiation eſtabliſhes Scepticiſm at its full length; and abſolutely overthrows the certainty of our Notices. I have ſhew'd it in reſpect of thoſe which ariſe from our ſenſes. I afterwards juſtified it on the ſubject of Demonſtrations; ſo that I have only now to ſhew you, That this Doctrine does not ſpare the cleareſt and moſt unqueſtionable of all the Principles. I ſhall now prove to you, That if your Belief takes place, the moſt certain of theſe Maxims will be found falſe; and conſequently the reſt, which depend thereon, and which at moſt have not more evidence than this firſt, will be doubtful and uncertain.

This ſurpriſes you without doubt, and you imagine I undertake a ſtrange task. Yet I hope eaſily to acquit my ſelf of it. Only inform me which of thoſe great Truths you may make moſt account of.

This has been a matter of ſome conteſt, replied he to me; I was taught in the Colledge, that the firſt and the

the moſt certain of all the Principles is this great Maxim, That it is impoſſible *the ſame thing can be, and cannot be:* Or to expreſs it in another manner, *That it is impoſſible for two contradictory Propoſitions to be true at the ſame time.* I have been always told this is the firſt ſtep our mind takes in the ſearch of Truth, and at the ſame time the laſt thing we find when we ſearch after the foundations of our Perſwaſions.

* See the Art of Thinking, part 4. chap. 5, &c.

Yet the *Carteſians* do not grant this *; they are agreed indeed that this Maxim is certain and unqueſtionable; for who dares deny it? But they affirm 'tis of no great uſe, and however, not the firſt of all Principles. They prefer this other Maxim before it: *One may affirm of each thing, whatever is contain'd in the diſtinct Idea we have of it.*

For my part, I think it an eaſy thing to agree them. The *Carteſians* Principle is undoubtedly the firſt of Affirmatives, and the fitteſt to prove Poſitive Truths. But that of the Schools is the firſt of the Negatives, and the propereſt to deſtroy Errors and Falſity.

I am eaſily of your mind, replied I. But I muſt add, That *Tranſubſtantiation* do's abſolutely overthrow both one and the other of theſe two Axioms; as well as a great many others, whoſe certainty is very near that of theirs. Which I ſhall now prove to you, beginning at the Principle of the *Carteſians*, on which I ſhall not long inſiſt. Mr. *Rohaut* ſhews in the beginning of his Treatiſe of Phyſics *, That 'tis impoſſible to conceive diſtinctly matter, without conceiving 'tis extended in length, largeneſs and depth, that it is figured, and impenetrable. I relate not his Words to you; you may read them in his Chapter of Matter.

* Roh. Phyſ. part. 1. chap. 7.

Yet you do not believe our Saviours Body is impenetrable in the *Euchariſt.* You believe 'tis there after the manner

manner of *Spirits*, *totum in toto*, & *totum in qualibet parte*. For thus has the Council of *Trent* defined it. As to *Figure*, I do not know how it can be given to a Body, whoſe parts are penetrable, and enter into one another. In fine, I do not underſtand how length can be attributed to it, or largeneſs, or depth; for what wou'd be the length, largeneſs and depth, which wou'd be in it? Will it be what it has in its natural Eſtate? Our Senſes atteſt ſufficiently the contrary. Will it be that of Bread and Wine? This cannot be; For were this ſo, the Body of Chriſt might be divided into two halfs, into three thirds, into four parts, &c. ſeeing all theſe Diviſions may be made of the Hoſt.

Here's then *three things* which are clearly comprehended in the Idea a man has of a Body, and which yet one cannot affirm of that of Jeſus Chriſt. And conſequently, here are *three Proofs* of the falſity of the *Carteſians* great Principle. Here's now a *fourth*, Theſe Philoſophers will not deny that that which makes the Eſſence of each thing, is comprehended in the diſtinct Idea, which one has of that thing; and that the thing is comprehended in the diſtinct Idea which we have of that which makes its Eſſence. For example, if extenſion be the Eſſence of Matter, as they pretend; they will acknowledg, that Extenſion is compriſed in the Idea of Matter, and the Matter in the Idea of the Extenſion; and thus, as one may affirm of *Matter*, that it is Extenſive; ſo one may affirm of that which is Extenſive, that it is Matter. They will as little deny, that the Maſs, or Collection of Moduſſes, is not that which makes the particular Eſſence of every thing; for every Body knows the Averſion they have to ſubſtantial Forms, ſo much mention'd in the Colledg. By conſequence, 'twill be equally impoſſible to form to ones ſelf a diſtinct

Idea

Idea of Bread and Wine, without bringing in all the Moduſſes of theſe two Subſtances, and diſtinctly conceiving the Maſs of theſe Moduſſes, without conceiving the Bread and Wine. See now, *Sir*, if according to the Maxims of the *Carteſians* you dare affirm, there's Bread and Wine in the *Euchariſt*, as you ſay, there's that which makes the Eſſence of Bread and Wine.

Being not well verſed in the new Philoſophy, ſaies Mr. *N.* I ſhall not undertake to anſwer what you now offered me. But ſhall reſerve my reply till you undertake to ſhew me our belief deſtroys the Principle of the Schools, which tell us, That two contradictory Propoſitions cannot be true. And I am even impatient to ſee how you will prove this.

I will eaſily ſhew you, ſaid I, That this Doctrine includes a great number of Contradictions; and conſequently of neceſſity either this Doctrine muſt be falſe, or the contradictory Propoſitions may be true. It's certain, if I undertake to ſhew you by Arguments, that your belief is contradictory, I ſhall (I imagine) be engaged in great conteſts with you.

We muſt run over all the knotty Queſtions of the Schools, and examine their niceſt Diſtinctions. And this is as little pleaſant to me, as I believe 'tis to you.

But I have another leſs tireſome way than this firſt; Which is to ſhew you, *Sir*, That your Doctors agree, 'tis contradictory to ſay divers things, which are the neceſſary conſequences of your belief, which they eaſily grant every time they think not of *Tranſubſtantiation*, and when the Idea of this Doctrine, which commonly confounds their Senſes, leaves them ſome liberty of judging of things according to the light of nature. Behold here an example of what I ſay.

Tranſubſtantiation,

Tranſubſtantiation, according to the common Sentiment of the Schools, do's neceſſarily imply the Exiſtence of Accidents without a Subject. I affirm, That this very thing is a pure Contradiction, and here's the manner how I ſhew it. You will allow me, it's a Contradiction to affirm, That an Accident is not an Accident. 'Tis your *Suarez*, who teaches it in ſo many words, *If the Accident* *, ſays he, *has no Subject, 'tis not an Accident, but a Subſtance.* You do not rightly comprehend this Author's meaning, ſays Mr. *N.* The Eſſence of the Accident do's not conſiſt to be actually in a Subject, but only to *may be therein*, to *be proper to this.* 'Tis this Diſpoſition, and this Aptitude, which makes the Eſſence of the Accident, and which never leaves it, and this is whatever *Suarez* meant in the paſſage you have cited.

* Suar. Met. diſp. 32. ſect. 1. n. 4.

You deceive your ſelf, reply'd I, *Suarez* ſenſe is, That Accidents will be Subſtances, if they be not actually in ſome Subject. To behold more diſtinctly this truth, obſerve if you pleaſe, that he does not ſay this, but to prove there are Subſtances, for thus he ſpeaks: He ſays, it cannot be denied but there are Accidents, ſeeing this is a thing which the Senſes atteſt. Whence he concludes, there are Subſtances, becauſe if there were not Subſtances, the Accidents would be without a Subject, and if they had no Subject, they would not be Accidents but Subſtances.

Had this Jeſuit the Thought you impute to him, his Argument would be reduced to this; *There are Accidents: The Accidents are proper to have Subjects: Theſe Subjects muſt be Subſtances: Then there are Subſtances.* But firſt if *Suarez* meant this, 'tis ſtrange he did not ſay it. He has ſpoken enough in his Life, not to be to ſeek to expreſs his Thoughts, and not to uſe ſuch uncouth ways as theſe would be.

Moreover in attributing to him this ſenſe, you make him make a ridiculous Argument. For in fine, what will this conſequence be? *Accidents are proper to exiſt in Sub-Subſtances: There are then Subſtances.* This is juſt as if I ſhould ſay, *The Fire is proper to melt Ice: Therefore where ever there is Fire, there muſt neceſſarily be Ice. Water is proper to quench Fire: Where ever then there is Water, there is alſo Fire.*

This may ſuffice on the Subject of your firſt Contradiction: The ſecond is a little more palpable: It conſiſts in your making the Body of Chriſt to be in ſeveral places at once, without loſing its Unity. For in fine, if it be in ſeveral places at once, it's ſeparate from its ſelf; and if it be ſeparate from it ſelf, 'tis no longer one only Body. All Philoſophers agree there's no certainer mark of a real diſtinction, than ſeparation, eſpecially that which they call *mutual*, and which they ſay conſiſts in ſeparate things, ſubſiſting each apart after the Separation. *The mutual ſeparation of two Extreams*, ſaith *Suarez*, * *is an evident ſign they be really diſtinguiſht.* Elſewhere he ſays this is the principal ſign †. He alſo affirms, it matters not to know, Whether the ſeparation be made naturally, or ſupernaturally; and that all one can ſay of it, is, That when the ſeparation is made naturally, the diſtinction is more viſibly and apparently known, than when God does does it by Miracle. Yet he affirms it to be then no leſs real.

* Suar. Met. in indice voce diſtinctio.
† Idem Met. diſp. 7. Sect. 2. n. 9, & 10.

And of this he gives us a conſiderable example: He ſays if we conſult only natural reaſon, we ſhall be apt to doubt whether *Quantity* be diſtinct from *Matter*, becauſe in effect theſe two things do never ſubſiſt without one another in the order of Nature.

But he adds, That the Myſtery of the *Euchariſt* does not permit us to doubt of their diſtinction, ſeeing that *Quantity*

Quantity does therein Miraculouſly ſubſiſt without *Matter.*

On this ſame Principle *Suarez*, and all your other Doctors affirm it impoſſible that the *Moduſſes* ſhould ſubſiſt without the things *Modifide*, no, not by an effect of Infinite power; becauſe, ſay they, there being no real diſtinction between the *Modus* and the thing *Modifide*, it's impoſſible the *Modus* ſhould ſubſiſt without the thing *Modifide.*

There cannot then be a real ſeparation between that which is not really diſtinct; and to ſuppoſe ſuch a ſeparation is a manifeſt contradiction. Yet your belief ſuppoſes this. It ſuppoſes the Body of Jeſus Chriſt in ſeveral places at a time, I mean in ſeveral ſeparate places; which have no contiguity between them, but are diſtinguiſhed by conſiderable ſpaces, and by a great number of Bodies which lye between them. Let's imagine three Conſecrated Hoſts, one here, the other in *China*, and the third in *America.* The Body of Chriſt is in all theſe three places, and at the ſame time in Heaven. It's perfectly entire in each of theſe four places. It's then ſeparate and far diſtant from it ſelf.

Pray tell me, Sir, is not this fair reaſoning, to ſay, *The body and the ſoul of a child of God are two diſtinct Subſtances; for after death the body remains in the Sepulchre, and the ſoul goes to Heaven?*

This is what cannot be denied: But if this reaſoning be good, why in the ſame manner is not this other, which is ſo like it, alſo good? *The body of Jeſus Chriſt is really diſtinct from the ſubſtance which is between the Prieſts hands, for the one is in Heaven, the other on Earth.* What difference can there be between theſe two reaſonings, which ſhall make the firſt good, and not the latter?

But here's an inſtance which I think comes nearer yet; you know the Father's Argument againſt the Pagans. There were Pagans who imagin'd their gods dwelt properly and really in the Statues Conſecrated to them. And there being not one of theſe gods to whom they did not Conſecrate a great number of theſe Repreſentations in ſeveral parts of the World, hence it manifeſtly follow'd, That they were in ſeveral places at a time: And the Fathers treated this as contradictory and ridiculous. They maintain'd that each of theſe gods could not be but in one place at a time, becauſe if he were in ſeveral, he muſt of neceſſity be divided, or multiply'd: Each of theſe Statues muſt contain but a ſmall bit of this god, or elſe there muſt be as many gods, as many *Jupiters*, as many *Mercuries*, as many *Vulcans*, as there were Statues Conſecrated to theſe falſe Divinities.

*Arnob. adver. Gentes, lib. 6. pag. 89. Edit. Prior.

And this is preciſely *Arnobius* his Argument * in a moſt excellent paſſage which I Tranſlated this Morning to read to you. I thereupon drew a Paper out of my Pocket, in which were theſe following words: *The Gods dwell in their Repreſentations: But do they dwell there in ſuch a manner, that each of them is entire in each Statue? Or are they there divided and by parts? Certainly neither one and the ſame God can be at the ſame time in ſeveral Statues, neither can he be cut into parts by diviſion. Suppoſe we in effect there are in the world ten thouſand Repreſentations of* Vulcan, *can this God be (as I have already ſaid) in theſe ten thouſand places at a time? I do not believe it. Why not? Becauſe that which of its own nature is ſingular, cannot multiply it ſelf in conſerving its ſimplicity and unity, much leſs if what you believe be true, That the Gods have a humane ſhape. For neither the hand ſeparated from the head, nor the foot divided from the reſt of the body, does make the whole perſon: for you muſt not ſay the*

the parts have the ſame effect as the whole, ſeeing the whole cannot ſubſiſt but by the union of its parts. Now if it be ſaid that this God is wholly entire in each Statue, the truth loſes all its ſtrength, ſeeing it's ſuppoſed the ſame thing may be every where at the ſame time. Or elſe it muſt be ſaid, That each God ſeparates himſelf in ſuch a manner from himſelf, that he is at the ſame time himſelf and another, not that he is ſeparated, but in ſuch a manner that he is at the ſame time the ſame, and another quite different. This then being abhorrent to nature, we muſt ſay one or the other of theſe two things, Either that there's an infinity of Vulcans, *if we will have this God to reſide in all the Statues which repreſent him; or that he is not in one of them, ſeeing his nature will not ſuffer him to be divided.*

Is it not true, Sir, purſued I, that I can bring the ſame Argument againſt you? I need only change one word in *Arnobius*, and inſtead of *Vulcan*, ſay *the Body of Jeſus Chriſt*. The Body of Chriſt, I may ſay, exiſts according to you, in the Euchariſt. But does it exiſt therein in ſuch a manner that 'tis entire in each Conſecrated Hoſt? or is it therein divided and in parts? Certainly neither one and the ſame Body can be at the ſame time in ſeveral Hoſts, neither can it be divided into parts. Suppoſe in effect there be in the world ten thouſand Conſcrated Hoſts, can, as I have already obſerv'd, one and the ſame Body be in theſe ten thouſand places at a time? I do not believe it. Why not? Becauſe that which of its own nature is ſingular, cannot be multiplied in conſerving its ſimplicity and unity, and ſo much the leſs in this occaſion, becauſe the queſtion is touching a Body like ours. For neither the Hand ſeparated from the Head, nor the Foot divided from the reſt of the Body, does make the whole Perſon. Now if it be ſaid the Body is quite entire in each of theſe Hoſts, the Truth loſes all its force, ſeeing we

ſuppoſe

ſuppoſe the ſame thing may be in all places at the ſame time. Or elſe you muſt ſay, That this Body ſeparates it ſelf in ſuch a manner from it ſelf, that it is at the ſame time the ſame, and another quite different. This then being abhorrent to nature, you muſt ſay one or the other of theſe two things, Either that there's an infinity of Chriſts Body, if you will have this Sacred Body reſident in all the Conſecrated Hoſts; or elſe that it is not one, ſeeing Nature ſuffers it not to be divided into ſeveral.

You ſee, Sir, I only copy out *Arnobous*, and faithfully Cite his Words. Yet this is not the only Father who has argued in this manner. St *Auſtin* imitated him in his time; and what is moſt conſiderable, he makes the whole application of it to the Body of *Jeſus Chriſt*. You know the *Manichees* believ'd our Saviour was at the ſame time on the Croſs, in the Sun and in the Moon, which they ridiculouſly term'd his Ships. St. *Auſtin* affirms to them, that this is impoſſible; and theſe are his Words, * *Tell us, I pray you, how many Chriſts you believe there are? He whom the Earth brought forth after he was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and which not only hangs on every Tree, but is moreover fixed to every Herb; does he differ from the other, whom the Jews Crucified under* Pontius Pilate, *and from this third, who is ſtretched out in the Moon and in the Sun? Or, is it the ſame Saviour fix'd on the Trees by one part of him, and free in the reſt, to come to the aſſiſtance of that which is fixed? If it be this laſt, he that ſuffered according to you under* Pontius Pilate; *how, in the firſt place, could he endure this kind of Death, having no fleſh, as you pretend? And then again, to whom did he leave theſe ſhips, to come and undergo thoſe pains which none but Bodies were capable of? In effect he could not endure thoſe things in reference*

* Aug. contr. Fauſt. lib. 26. cap. 11.

reference to his ſpiritual Preſence; and according to the corporal one he could not be at the ſame time in the Sun, and in the Moon, and on the Croſs.

He could not, ſays St. *Auſtin*! but why could he not? Is it more difficult for a Body to be at the ſame time on the Croſs, in the Moon, and in the Sun, than in Heaven, and an infinite number of places on the Earth? *Of neceſſity* (ſaid he in another place) † *the body of Jeſus Chriſt riſen muſt be in one only place.* But why muſt it be ſo? and why may he not be in ſeveral places at a time, if he be there in effect, as your Creed bears?

† Aug in Joan. tract. 36. pronunciatur.

The moſt famous among the Fathers have uſed the ſame Arguments againſt the *Macedonians*. Theſe Hereticks affirmed the Holy Spirit to be but a Creature, of a like nature to that of Angels. The Holy Fathers to refute them, alledge, That an Angel cannot be in ſeveral places at a time; whereas the Holy Spirit was in the ſame time in ſeveral places extream diſtant from one another, ſeeing he never forſook the Apoſtles, although for the Preaching of the Goſpel they were diſperſed over all the Earth. Thus does St. *Athanaſius* argue, or one under his name in the diſpute he is ſaid to have againſt *Arius*, (*a*) *Didymus* of *Alexandria*, (*b*) St. *Baſil*, (*c*) St. *Greg. Naz.* (*d*) St. *Ambroſe*, (*e*) *Paſcaſius* Deacon of *Rome*, (*f*) *Anaſtaſius Sinait*, (*g*) *Rupert*, (*h*) and others, very ill, as you ſee, were it not ſuppoſed impoſſible for the ſame Body to be in ſeveral Places at a time. Were not this held then for undeniable, they would without doubt have been anſwered, That there's no more difficulty in ſuppoſing a Spirit in ſeveral Places, than a material Body, as that of our Saviour was. But in effect it appears the Fathers have ever believed this could not be, ſeeing hereby he refuted the extravagant Opinions of both Hereticks and Pagans.

(*a*) Apud. Athan.
(*b*) Didym. de Sp. S.
(*c*) Baſil de Sp. S. cap 2.
(*d*) Naz. Orat. 3. 7.
(*e*) Amb. de *Sp. S.* lib. 1. cap. 7.
(*f*) Paſc. Rom. de *Sp. S.* lib. 1. cap. 12.
(*g*) Anaſt. Sin. lib. 1. de dogm. fid.
(*h*) Rup. lib. 10. cap. 22.

More-

Moreover your great evaſion, which conſiſts in diſtinguiſhing what may naturally be, and what may happen by an effect of the Almighty Power of God; this evaſion, I ſay, will not ſerve in this occaſion; for, in fine, the Queſtion was not in theſe Diſputes, what might or what might not naturally be, but what might abſolutely be. The *Pagans* did not pretend, That by means of natural Cauſes the Gods were placed in Statues conſecrated to them. The *Manichees* did not ſubject our Saviour to the Laws of Nature. The *Macedonians* did not believe the Holy Spirit was ſent by ſome created Cauſe. All theſe People made the Divine Power intervene in theſe occaſions; and conſequently the Fathers affirming that what theſe extravagant People ſaid was impoſſible, they meant 'twas ſo in all ſenſes, and that 'twas a mere contradiction.

It appears then from all I have now ſaid, That according to the trueſt and beſt Reaſon, according to your own Authors, and according to the Fathers, it's a pure contradiction to ſuppoſe Chriſts Body in ſeveral places at a time. But the contradiction will be ſtill more manifeſt, if we add, That ſuppoſing this Divine Body in ſeveral places, one may ſay of it things directly oppoſite to one another. Conſidering it ſuch as it is in Heaven, you believe it has its three dimenſions, each of which you believe may be meaſured, and compared with thoſe of other Bodies, which are greater or leſſer. You believe it has its parts one out of another, That it poſſeſſes a place, whoſe parts anſwer thoſe of this ſacred Body, That he is therein viſible and palpable, acts, &c. You ſay the direct contrary of this ſame Body, ſuch as you ſuppoſe it in the Euchariſt. You believe it there exiſts after the manner of Spirits, that it is therein reduced to one point, that it has its parts one

in

in another, that 'tis therein inviſible, and without action. You alſo believe, that to conſider it only as 'tis in the Euchariſt, it's removed out of one place, and let to reſt in another; here he is lifted up, and there he is let down. Are not theſe, Sir, ſo many contradictions? Is not this to affirm and deny the ſame thing of the ſame Subject in relation to the ſame parts and time? and what do you call contradictory, if this be not ſo?

A Body in two places, ſays Mr. *N.* is equivalent to two Bodies, and one may ſay of it the moſt oppoſite things, without contradiction. I muſt acknowledge one cannot do it, when we ſpeak of a Body exiſting only in one place. But when we ſpeak of a Body, or generally of a Subject, which exiſts in diverſe places at a time, there's no contradiction in affirming and denying the ſame things of it. This is no new anſwer, and I ſuppoſe you have read it in our Authors.

Your Authors, I confeſs have made uſe of it, tepli'd I, but I affirm their anſwer was inſincere, it being not what they thought, but what the intereſt of their cauſe required. And for a proof of what I ſay, is it not true, That when the Queſtion was of things wherein they were not intereſſed, and which they regarded as abſolutely independent from the Euchariſt, they have not ſtuck to maintain 'twas a contradiction to ſay things oppoſite of a Body in two places?

For example, becauſe it's held among you, that Chriſts Body is not *circumſcriptively*, that is to ſay after the manner of Bodies, in ſuch a manner that each of its parts anſwers to that of the place which it poſſeſſes, becauſe, ſay I, 'tis believ'd that the Body of *Jeſus Chriſt* is not in this manner but in Heaven, and that 'tis ſuppoſed in the Euchariſt only *Sacramentally*, which is to ſay after the manner of Spirits, *totum in toto & totum in qualibet parte*;

te; The *Thomiſts* * have imagined, That it mattered not, as to the Euchariſt, to know whether a Body may be circumſcriptively in two places. They thought they might freely explain themſelves on this Queſtion, without fearing the judgment they might make of it, ſhould prove of dangerous Conſequence to the Doctrine of the Real Preſence. Being in this manner withheld by no conſideration, and applying themſelves to nothing but what appeared to them to be true, they pronounced it impoſſible for one Body to be circumſcriptively in two places; and their ſtrongeſt reaſon is, that hereby it might happen, that this Body might be in motion in one of theſe places, and at reſt in another; here it might be cold, and there hot, and ſo of the reſt.

* See Maſſius Phyſ. lib. 4. cap. 5. queſt. 5. aſſert. 3.

It's according to them a pure contradiction to ſay, That a Body which ſhall be circumſcriptively in two places, ſhall be at the ſame time at reſt and in motion; but if this be a contradiction, why is it not as conſiderable a one to ſay theſe ſame things of a Body which is Sacramentally in two places, or Sacramentally in one, and circumſcriptively in the other? For in fine, are not reſt and motion as oppoſite, and inconſiſtent when the Bodies which they affect are Sacramentally in two places, as when they be therein circumſcriptively? Moreover, what I ſay of reſt and motion, I mean it of all the other oppoſitions which I denoted to you a while ago.

And this is what the Jeſuits have ſeen, and which has made them abandon the opinion of the *Thomiſts*. They perceiv'd it impoſſible to maintain, That the Body of Chriſt is Sacramentally in ſeveral places at a time, if he be not there circumſcriptively. They perceiv'd one or the other of theſe things muſt neceſſarily be ſaid, Either that a Body cannot be ſacramentally, nor circumſcriptively in two places, or that it may be there equally either in one or the other

other of theſe two manners. They were forced to take one of theſe ſides. Had they been at liberty, they would have taken the firſt. But in taking it, they muſt ſhock *Tranſubſtantiation*, which they would by no means diſcredit. They have therefore taken hold of the ſecond, and affirmed, That a Body may be, both Sacramentally and Circumſcriptively in two places.

For a proof of what I have ſaid, in reference to theſe Peoples intereſt in the Queſtion, be pleas'd to conſider in what manner theſe ſame Jeſuits have decided a Queſtion very like the former, but on a matter which does not ſeem to have any relation to the *Euchariſt*. Some followers of *Ariſtotle*, both *Greeks* and *Arabians*, have heretofore entertained a very fooliſh and ridiculous Opinion. They affirm'd 'tis not true, That every man has a reaſonable Soul particular to himſelf; that there's but one for all, which is in all Bodies, without loſing its unity, and without being any where than in theſe Bodies; juſt as you will have the Body of Jeſus Chriſt exiſt in the Euchariſt, without multiplying it ſelf, and without being elſewhere, excepting in *Heaven*. The Jeſuits undertaking (x) to decide this Queſtion, and forgetting the Euchariſt, as in effect 'twas troubleſome to remember it, have therefore poſitively aſſerted, That the Opinion of theſe Philoſophers is inſupportable. Having particularly affirmed that it implies a manifeſt contradiction, becauſe 'twould happen hereupon, That the ſame Soul ſhould be at the ſame time knowing and ignorant, good and bad, happy and unhappy; there being none of theſe qualities which agree not with ſeveral men, and conſequently with the ſame Soul, if it be true there is but one for all men.

They are without doubt much in the right; but if a Soul in two places, which is united to two ſeveral

Bodies, cannot be at the ſame time knowing and ignorant, good and bad, happy and unhappy, without a contradiction; I would then know how one and the ſame Body can be, without contradiction, in motion and at reſt, cold and hot, diviſible and indiviſible in two ſeveral places. It is clear that one of theſe things is no leſs impoſſible nor leſs contradictory than the other. And conſequently it's plain that when your Doctors affirm there's no contradiction in ſaying, That the ſame Body in two places may be at the ſame time at reſt and in motion, they do not ſpeak according to their Conſcience, but according to the intereſt of the Cauſe which they have taken upon them to defend.

I ſhould never have done, ſhould I undertake to particularize all the other contradictions which your Doctrine contains. Thoſe which I have already denoted, are ſufficient to ſhew you, it abſolutely deſtroys this great principle, That the ſame thing cannot at the ſame time be, and not be. I paſs on then to another Maxim, which is no leſs evident than that, which is, *That the whole is greater than a part.* Your *Tranſubſtantiation* does plainly be-ly either this Maxim, or that which ſays, *The thing contained is never greater than that which contains it.* To make this more apparent, we muſt obſerve there are two different opinions in your Schools touching the extenſion of Chriſts Body in the Euchariſt. Moſt hold that it retains it. Others, that it loſes it. The Catechiſm of the Council of *Trent* ſeems to uphold the latter of theſe opinions. And this is what it ſays, * *Let the Curates take care to teach, That Jeſus Chriſt is not in the Sacrament, as in a place, for the place is as the things, in as much as they have greatneſs; and we do not ſay our Lord is in the Sacrament, as being little or great, not reſpecting the quantity, but the ſubſtance. For the ſubſtance of Bread is chan-*

* Cat. Trid. Part 2. Tit. de Euch. n. 43.

ged

ged into the ſubſtance of Jeſus Chriſt, not into its greatneſs or quantity.

However if this Sentiment be granted, it's certain, *That the whole is not greater than its part:* Seeing neither the whole nor its parts have any greatneſs. If on the contrary you follow the firſt opinion, you overthrow this other Principle, *That the thing contained is never greater than that which contains it.* In effect Chriſts Body, which according to this opinion, has in the Euchariſt all the extenſion which it has in its natural ſtate, will be contained in a ſpace incomparably ſmaller than it is, there being no ſpace ſo ſmall, wherein one may not put ſome crumb of the Hoſt, or ſome drop of the Conſecrated Wine, and conſequently all the Body of Jeſus Chriſt.

This is moreover a Maxim which *Philoſophers* and Divines do equally acknowledg for granted, *That nothing produces its ſelf: That nothing has relation to its ſelf.* Hereby chiefly the Fathers were wont to oppoſe the extravagancy of *Sabellius*, who acknowledg'd in the *Divinity* only one Perſon under three ſeveral Names, and who was at the ſame time, *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*. They cloſed his mouth with this Anſwer, That the Father begetting the Son, and the Holy Spirit proceeding from both theſe two Perſons, hereby theſe three have ſuch Relations as muſt diſtinguiſh them, and conſequently will not ſuffer theſe to be one and the ſame Perſon.

Yet is it true, That as in your Hypotheſis the Body of Jeſus Chriſt produces it ſelf, ſo it has a relation to it ſelf, like thoſe which diſtinguiſh the Perſons in the *Trinity*. In effect you hold, That the *Tranſubſtantiation* is the work of Jeſus Chriſt; and what's more particular, you believe it to be the work of Jeſus Chriſt Man. You believe

believe that the Conſecration is a Prieſtly act of our *Saviour*, who immolates himſelf by the Miniſtry of the Prieſt, reducing himſelf into a ſtate of death under the *ſpecies* of Bread and Wine *, you believe † that Jeſus Chriſt is a Prieſt only as Man. So that he as Man changing the Bread into his Body, one may ſay his Humane Nature is his proper work: That it creates it ſelf, produces it ſelf, and conſequently that there's a real Relation between Jeſus Chriſt Man, and Jeſus Chriſt Man, between Jeſus Chriſt Prieſt, or Sacrificer, and Jeſus Chriſt Sacrificed; between Jeſus Chriſt producing, and Jeſus Chriſt produced.

* Concil. Trid. Seſſ. 22. Cap. 2.
† See Merat. de incom. diſp. 1. Sect. 2.

I ſuppoſe in effect, that if *Tranſubſtantiation* be granted, it would be a real production of the Body of Jeſus Chriſt. For beſides, that your moſt famous Divines acknowledg it, we know it eſſential to all changes to have two different Terms, one of which is deſtroy'd, and the other produced; and you'l agree with me herein, if you run over all the changes remarkt hitherto, whether Subſtantial or Accidental, Natural or Supernatural. You'l ſee there's always an Accident, if the change be accidental; or a Subſtance, if it be ſubſtantial, which ceaſes to exiſt; and another Accident, or another Subſtance, which begins to exiſt, and takes the place of the Accident, or Subſtance, which is deſtroy'd. And conſequently, if the Bread were chang'd into the Body of Jeſus Chriſt, the Body of Chriſt muſt neceſſarily be produced by this change. And as it would be produced by it ſelf, it would have a real relation to its ſelf, contrary to that Maxim, which implies, That nothing produces it ſelf: and, That nothing relates to its ſelf.

In fine, Sir, this is a conſtant Maxim, and ever ſuppos'd, tho it be never expreſt, That whatever has all the ſenſible marks of a thing, is that thing: That having the

the eſſence of it, it ought to bear its name. Hereon depends the certainty of diſcerning, whether of ſingle things or Species. For in fine, our judgments cannot pierce into the bottom of things, or diſcover their eſſence by this ſort of knowledg call'd *intuitive* in the Schools. We only know them by the help of the ſenſible marks which diſtinguiſh them. So that to overthrow this Maxim, is to render the diſcerning of things abſolutely impoſſible, or at leaſt doubtful and uncertain.

And yet this is the effect of *Tranſubſtantiation:* It places the Body of Chriſt in the Euchariſt under the ſenſible marks of Bread and Wine, where there's none of theſe two Subſtances; and you believe our Lords Body exiſts in a place where it has none of the marks which are wont to make it known, and to diſtinguiſh it from the reſt of things.

This, Sir, may ſuffice to ſhew you, That *Tranſubſtantiation* abſolutely overthrows the certitude of our Notices. I believe you perceive, That if it ſubſiſts, the firſt Principles be falſe, Demonſtrations themſelves deceive us, our Senſes are ſubject to a thouſand deluſions; and in a word, we ought to doubt of whatever we have hitherto held for moſt certain, and we have nothing elſe to do but to plunge our ſelves into Scepticiſm, which I reckon to be the moſt deplorable condition in the world, ſeeing 'tis the total annihilation of our reaſon.

Mr. *N.* was about anſwering me, but was hindred by the coming in of one of his Friends, who had buſineſs with him. We having been a great while together, I laid hold on this occaſion, to take my leave of him.

CON-

CONFERENCE VI.

Wherein the Proofs contained in the foregoing Diſcourſes are defended, and the impoſſibility of uſing them againſt the Doctrine of the Trinity, is Demonſtrated.

AFTER this laſt Converſation, there paſt ſome days before I ſaw Mr. *N.* again. He came not to me, and I was unwilling to force a viſit on him; but having at length by good hap met with him alone in his uſual Walks, I joyn'd my ſelf to him. We fell at firſt into ſeveral Diſcourſes, and at length on Matters of Religion; when I made bold to ask him, Whether he had thought on what had paſt in our former Conferences?

He anſwer'd, That he had in truth ruminated thereon after I had left him, but he was reſolved to diſturb himſelf no more with thoſe Matters. For to what purpoſe, ſaid he, unleſs to ſhake a mans faith, and diſcompoſe his mind? For I am ſo perſwaded of the truth of *Tranſubſtantiation*, and I find it has ſuch ſtrong tyes with the Principles of Chriſtianity, that I do not at all doubt but it makes up a part of this holy Religion. So that your reaſons tending only to ſhew me, that if *Tranſubſtantiation* be a Doctrine of Chriſtianity, we are to blame in being Chriſtians. I not doubting of the *firſt*, muſt inſenſibly doubt of the *ſecond*. Wherefore I had rather once for all to baniſh theſe thoughts out of my head, and remain in the ſtate wherein I have hitherto lived, than to run the risk of turning

turning *Libertin*, which is the thing in the world I moſt hate.

In effect, continued he without giving me time to anſwer; If your way of arguing be good, I could make uſe of it againſt the Myſtery of the Trinity, and eaſily direct your proofs againſt this Capital Truth, and that with the ſame ſucceſs as you have done againſt *Tranſubſtantiation*: Take, for example, the moſt ſpecious Objection of the *Arrians* and *Socinians*. They affirm this great Myſtery abſolutely ruins one of the moſt certain Principles of Sciences. What we believe, reduces it ſelf to two Heads: *Firſt*, That the Perſons of the *Trinity* are really diſtinct from one another: the Father is not the Son, and the Holy Spirit is neither the Father nor the Son. The other, That neither of theſe Perſons is really diſtinguiſht from the Divine Eſſence which they poſſeſs: That the Father is God, the Son God, and the Holy Ghoſt God; and what is more, That the Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt are but one God, poſſeſſing only one Divinity; ſo that the Divinity of the Father is the ſame with that of the Son; and that of the Father and the Son is not different from that of the Holy Ghoſt.

Pray, Sir, now inform me how to accord all this with the principle which paſſes for unqueſtionable in Metaphyſics, to wit, That if two Subjects be not diſtinct from a third, they cannot be diſtinguiſht between themſelves? How can this principle ſubſiſt, if it be true, that the Divine Perſons, which are moſt diſtinct in themſelves, are not at all from the Eſſence, which is common to them? what can you ſay in this Demonſtration, *When two Subjects do not really differ from a third, They differ not really from one another.* The Perſons *of the Trinity differ not really from the Divine Eſſence which they poſſeſs. Then they differ not really from one another.*

You will grant me, that this is a Phyſical Demonſtration, and otherwiſe evident than thoſe call'd Moral. May I not then apply to the Trinity, the *firſt* proof you have uſed againſt *Tranſubſtantiation*, and ſay, That if this Myſtery made part of the Chriſtian Religion, the Objections the Infidels bring to oppoſe it, would have more force than the proofs which eſtabliſh the Divinity of it, ſeeing theſe proofs have only a Moral evidence, and the Objections which might be brought againſt them, have all the evidence term'd Phyſical.

I ſay the ſame thing of your *ſecond* proof. I need only change therein two words, and inſtead of *Senſe* and *Tranſubſtantiation*, ſay *Reaſon* and the *Trinity*. I need only ſay, If the Myſtery of the Trinity be true, our Reaſon deceives us in the judgment ſhe makes of it, in thinking to ſee clearly and diſtinctly, That the perſons of the Divinity are not different from one another: If our Reaſon deceives us in this, it may as well deceive us in all other things; if it may deceive us in all things, the proofs of Chriſtianity are of no validity.

Even your *third* proof cannot eſcape the being appli'd to the Myſtery of the Trinity. In effect its obſervable, That the Maxim I now alledg'd to you, is not only a Metaphyſical principle, but the foundation of all affirmatory Syllogiſms, which prove one cannot joyn two terms by the affirmation, but by ſhewing one may joyn them both to a third, term'd a *mean*. By conſequence, if this Maxim be falſe, as it muſt of neceſſity be, if the Myſtery of the Trinity be true, we muſt no longer think of arguing, but yield up the certainty of this ſort of knowledg to the Sceptics.

And here's, Sir, the natural uſe of your Method, if it be follow'd; we muſt retrench from our Religion whatever our reaſon will not ſuffer, and as ſoon as ever ſhe

ſhall

ſhall ſee any oppoſition to ariſe between her Maxims, and our Myſteries, we have no other party to betake our ſelves to, but that of diſowning theſe Myſteries, and rejecting them as ſo many Errors. Thus Faith ſhall depend on our *Capricio*, and we ſhall henceforward believe, not what it ſhall pleaſe God to reveal to us, but whatever it ſhall pleaſe us to imagin. Would you have me to take this courſe, or to become an *Arian* or *Socinian*? and do you think we ought to yield up every Article of our Faith as ſoon as ever we ſhall find any repugnance in them to the deceitful Maxims of our wretched reaſon, which oftner ſerves to lead us out, than in the way; and to blind us, than to enlighten us?

Far am I, repli'd I, from this; and tho I am perſwaded of the innocency of my Method, I ſhould be the firſt to condemn it, did I believe 'twould produce ſuch pernicious effects. But its certainly an offering of great violence, to make it ſerve for the drawing from it ſuch dangerous Concluſions. Pray let me juſtifie it, and for this purpoſe, give me your attention for ſome minutes.

It's, firſt, very ſtrange you ſhould reject Arguments wherein you cannot remark the leaſt defect. They conſiſt of ſundry Propoſitions, amongſt which there's not one, but what is not only true, but moreover evident. Moreover they be ſtrictly alli'd, and their Concluſions are drawn in the moſt natural manner in the world. Ought they then to be rejected on vain ſuſpicions, and uncertain apprehenſions? Is not this proceeding injurious to faith? For what would ſhe be, might her Doctrines be combated by Reaſons, which ſuffer no reply, and from which there's no defence, but by ſaying, We wont examine them? Is not this formally to accuſe her, That ſhe will not endure the light? Should all the world follow your example, what

ſhall we anſwer to the Libertins of the Age? how would they triumph over our Religion?

Moreover, let me entreat you to conſider, there's great difference between your two firſt proofs, and my two firſt; yours are drawn from Reaſon, and mine from Senſe. You ſay 'tis evident to Reaſon, there are three Eſſences in the Trinity, or that there's only one Perſon. Whereas I ſay it's evident, not only to Reaſon, but to Senſe, That the *Euchariſt* is Bread and Wine.

What matter is it, ſaid Mr. *N.* that the Evidence which you oppoſe to that of the Proofs of Chriſtianity, is that which is perceiv'd by Reaſon, or that which ſtrikes the Senſes, ſeeing the firſt is no leſs than the ſecond? or, to ſpeak better, ſeeing that is far greater than this?

It's of great concern, anſwer'd I, and that on divers accounts. Firſt, becauſe the Suppoſition you make is not certain. You ſuppoſe, That the certainty of the acts of reaſon, ſuch as that is which ſprings from Demonſtration, is greater than that which ariſes from the report of the Senſes. I confeſs this is the *Carteſians* opinion. But you know the *Gaſſendiſts* hold the contrary. Theſe laſt, which are certainly not to be contemn'd, hold there's no greater certainty than that of the Senſes. They tell us, They are the Senſes which perſwade us of the truth of the firſt Principles, and that we know not, for example, *The whole is greater than a part*, but by obſerving in all the Objects which have ſtruck our Senſes, that the *part* was always leſſer than the *whole*.

They are not only the *Gaſſendiſts*, which are of this opinion; The Vulgar, and generally all thoſe who are not *Philoſophers*, are herein of their opinion; and if you will have them comprehend there are certain things of which they ought to be more ſtrongly perſwaded than of what

they

they ſee, they will preſently believe you are not in earneſt with them. This appears conſiderable to me; for you know neither Faith nor Salvation are the portion only of Philoſophers; the ordinary people having as great a right to them as the moſt Learned: So that my Proofs have this advantage, That they be convincing according to the Hypotheſis of all the world; whereas yours ſuppoſe things which few know, and concerning which all thoſe who are capacitated to judg, are not agreed.

Eſpecially the firſt of yours ſuppoſes a thing which Mr. *Huet* oppoſes with all his ſtrength, * That Phyſical Demonſtrations have greater evidence and certitude than Moral ones. He affirms on the contrary, That Moral Demonſtrations are the moſt convincing of all; and that neither Phyſics nor Metaphyſics, nor Geometry, has one to be parallel'd with them, whether in general with thoſe which perſwade us of moſt matters of fact, or in particular with thoſe which he makes uſe of to eſtabliſh the truth of Chriſtian Religion. He hereupon ſufficiently enlarges himſelf, and I doubt not but you have remarkt that place as well as I.

* Huetii Demonſt. Evang. pag. 3, & 4.

I may then deny your Suppoſition, which if I ſhould, I ſhall have very able perſons for my Abettors. But I'le grant what you ſay to be true, and ſuppoſe all the world of your opinion; I know another way to ſolve your Objection, which is, Sir, That ſhould I agree with you, That conſidering things in general, the evidence of Reaſon is greater than that which offers it ſelf to the Senſes, this will not hinder me from maintaining, That in particulariſing things, we ſhall find incomparably fewer things evident to Reaſon, than of ſuch as are perceived by the Senſes. In effect, how few are the Truths which are perceiv'd by reaſon alone *, wherein not only the Sceptics, but the Dogmatiſts do agree? Scarcely is there one which has not been debated *Pro & Con.* It's

* Dogmatiſts, ſuch as maintain againſt the Sceptics the certainty of Sciences.

It's not the ſame of thoſe which are perceiv'd by the Senſes. For excepting the Sceptics, whom you cannot bring in againſt the Senſes, ſeeing they are as bad friends to Reaſon; Scarce will you find one who will not allow what the Senſes diſcover to us, at leaſt in groſs and popular Objects, if I may ſay ſo, and which are the only ones we now ſpeak of. Conſult all the Sects of the Philoſophers, all the people in the Univerſe, to know whether it be now day, or whether an Horſe be greater than an *Ant*; you will find, I do not ſay, not a Sect or Nation, but not any one particular perſon that denies this.

The light of Senſe has moreover this advantage over that of Reaſon, that it's leſs liable to be diſordered by prejudices. Prejudices make people doubt who are ſtrongly poſſeſſed by them, of Truths, which a free Reaſon, and a diſengaged mind clearly perceives. What is there, for example, which my reaſon perceives more diſtinctly than the impoſſibility of a Body's being in two places without diviſion? Yet your Reaſon imagines to ſee the contrary. Whence comes this, but from the prejudice wherewith one of us is poſſeſs'd?

But 'tis not the ſame with the Senſes. There's no prejudice which hinders them from ſeeing Objects, ſuch as they are, which we muſt always underſtand of the moſt apparent and groſſeſt Objects.

* Lawful Prejudices, *chap.* 14.

There are two ſorts of clearneſs, ſays an Author much eſteem'd among you *, *the one ſo lively and piercing, that it's impoſſible for men not to ſee it; and which is ſuch as cannot be darkned by any cloud of Prejudices or Paſſions, whereby it ſhews it ſelf uniformly to all men; of this kind*, adds he, *are things expoſed to the Senſes.*

In a word, It's a thouſand times eaſier to deceive our Reaſon than our Senſes. There's no truth ſo certain, which

which a Sophiſter will not render doubtful by his Subtilties and Artifices. Even the moſt learned People are ſometimes deceived, and we have ſeen but too many Examples of this in all Ages. But deceive my Senſes if you can, on Objects as familiar, as thoſe we now ſpake of. Go and inform any one, That the food he commonly uſes, is not Bread and Beer.

The evidence of Senſe, then, has great advantages over that which is perceiv'd only by Reaſon; whence appears the Poſſibility of my Proofs being good, and your two firſt objections being not ſo. Nay, the thing is not only poſſible, but true, and I hope to convince you of it with little trouble. Whatever you have hitherto ſaid to me, turns on theſe two Suppoſitions. The firſt, That Reaſon ſees evidently on one hand, the truth of this maxim of the Philoſophers, That *when two Subjects be not diſtinct from a third, they are not ſo from one another. The ſecond, That there's more evidence in this, than there is in the Reaſons which eſtabliſh the Truth of Chriſtian Religion.*

But, I firſt affirm to you, It's impoſſible theſe two Suppoſitions can be true. And if they were, the *Arians* and *Socinians* wou'd have good grounds to deny the Myſtery of the Trinity. For firſt, if our Reaſon evidently ſaw the Trnth of the Maxim you bring againſt me, we muſt neceſſarily ſay one of theſe two things; Either that in effect, this Maxim is true, or that Evidence is not a certain mark of Truth. Here's no medium.

You muſt of neceſſity take one of theſe ſides. The ſecond differs in nothing from Scepticiſm; you muſt therefore take the firſt. It muſt be ſaid, that according to you the Maxim of the Philoſophers is true.

That's my thought, ſays Mr. *N.* Are you of the ſame mind, repli'd I, on the ſubject of the Oppoſition, which you

you think you evidently ſee between this Maxim, and the Myſtery of the Trinity? Do you think this to be a true and real Oppoſition? Or do you believe it to be falſe, altho you evidently ſee it?

Should I ſay it's falſe, anſwer'd he, you wou'd make me the ſame Objection you have already made; you will tell me there may be error in things moſt evident, ſeeing I might evidently ſee Oppoſition where there is none; and that thus Evidence wou'd not be the mark of Truth; and conſequently, That the Sceptics wou'd have Reaſon to doubt of every thing. To avoid ſuch dangerous Extremities, I had rather tell you, that this Oppoſition is as true, as 'tis evident.

You believe, then ſaid I to him, that effectively, and in the Truth of the thing, the Myſtery of the *Trinity* is directly againſt an unqueſtionable Maxim. You believe there's a real Contradiction between theſe two things, and that 'tis impoſſible to make them agree.

This is certainly true, anſwer'd he. Then ſaid I, the Sceptics muſt have good grounds, ſeeing Contradiction is not the note of Falſity. What is there more unqueſtionable than this Maxim, That if a Propoſition be true, that which contradicts it muſt neceſſarily be falſe? Is not this the Foundation of certainty? You now, ſee Sir, on what precipices you caſt your ſelves, and what are the unavoidable Conſequences of your Suppoſitions. Hence you ſee the neceſſity of acknowledging there are ſome falſe; and that in effect, if the Philoſophers Maxim be true, it's not contrary to the Myſtery of the Trinity; or if there be any Oppoſition between this Myſtery and this Maxim, we muſt not conclude the Maxim to be falſe, ſeeing it's impoſſible the Myſtery ſhou'd be ſo.

But

But this is not all, I wiſh you wou'd explain your ſelf, on Mr. *Huets* Sentiment, I lately mention'd to you: Which Demonſtrations do you believe moſt certain, Phyſical, or Moral ones? Or to ſpeak more preciſely, wherein think you lies moſt certainty and evidence, in the Demonſtration you brought againſt me, in the name of the *Socinians* and *Arians*, or in thoſe Mr. *Huet* makes uſe of to prove the Truth of the Chriſtian Religion? Take which ſide you will, you cannot eſcape me.

If you ſay the advantage lies on the ſide of Mr. *Huets* Proofs, you deliver up to me your Objection. In this Suppoſition right *Reaſon* will have us believe the Trinity, notwithſtanding the difficulties therein; ſeeing nothing's more conformable to her Maxims, than always to prefer that which is more evident, before that which is leſs.

But if you ſay on the contrary, That the *Arians* and *Socinians* Objection, has more ſtrength than Mr. *Huets* Proofs: You hereby acknowledg, That the Doctrine of the Trinity is contrary to good Sence, and ought therefore to be rejected, whether by retrenching of it from the number of the Doctrines which Chriſtianity teaches, ſuppoſing it can be ſeparated from it, or by rejecting the whole of Chriſtianity, ſuppoſing this Doctrine be inſeparable from the reſt.

In effect, were theſe Proofs, and this Objection of an equal force, they wou'd bring the mind into ſuſpence, whence right Reaſon cou'd not draw it out. She wou'd not know on which ſide to determine her ſelf; and finding at bottom of this Religion, things which will appear to her evidently falſe, She wou'd carry us as far off from it, as She wou'd bring us near it, in making us comprehend the force of the Proofs which authorize it.

Moreover, making two contrary Judgments on the Subject of Religion, one that it is true, becauſe the Proofs produced in its favour are good; the other that it is falſe, becauſe it teaches Abſurdities; She muſt therefore be deceived in the one or the other of theſe Judgments, and thus neither the one nor the other of theſe wou'd be certain.

How wou'd it be then, ſuppoſing all the advantage lay on one ſide, as it wou'd plainly, if what might be offered againſt Chriſtianity, has more evidence and certainty, than what is uſed to eſtabliſh the Divinity of it? where ſhall we find that in this Suppoſition, we muſt prefer what is leſs certain, before what is more? And who thinks, if a man does this, he deſerves to be eternally miſerable?

How then, ſays Mr. *N.* Shall Reaſon preſcribe us what we are to believe? Shall ſhe become the Rule, yea, and Judg of our Faith? And do we not know that the truths of Chriſtianity are infinitely above the Comprehenſion of human Reaſon.

You confound abundance of things, which you ſhou'd diſtinguiſh, repli'd I. Firſt, there's a great deal of difference between diſcovering to us what we muſt believe, as revealed of God; and what we muſt reject, as invented by Men. The firſt of theſe Duties contains two parts. In effect, One may make two ſorts of enquiry after what one is to believe. Firſt, In examining the Doctrine offered us, and comparing it with the Maxims of Reaſon, juſt as we do when we wou'd determine our ſelves on a queſtion of Philoſophy. The ſecond in examining purely whether this Doctrine has been revealed by God, either by enquiring wherher it makes a part of a Religion ſuppoſed Divine; or by enquiring whether the Religion, of which we do not doubt but this

Do-

Doctrine makes up a part, has been revealed of God.

It's certain, it cannot be expected from Reaſon to enquire, in this firſt manner, what we ought to believe; and this for two Conſiderations. *Firſt*, whatever attempts ſhe may make, ſhe will never get the maſtery: the cleareſt wit, and moſt piercing judgment, not being in a capacity of raiſing it ſelf, of it ſelf, to the diſcovery of theſe ſublime Truths which Faith comprehends. And ſhou'd Reaſon diſcover ſome one, the perſwaſion ſhe could give us of it, would not be a Divine Faith. It would be perhaps a Science, an Opinion, according as the proofs whereon this is grounded are probable or demonſtrative. But this wou'd never be a Divine Faith; it being not poſſible for Divine Faith to have any other foundation than the authority of God.

When we wou'd know whether a Doctrine makes part of a Religion of whoſe Divinity we are otherwiſe ſatisfied; as when we wou'd enquire whether Chriſtianity teaches *Tranſubſtantiation*, or the Real Preſence; this is certainly to be examin'd by Reaſon. For how can we know this, if we have loſt our Reaſon? Yet in this enquiry ſhe does not ſo much keep the quality of a Rule, as that of an Organ; I would ſay, we make this enquiry by means of this faculty call'd Reaſon, yet this faculty does not then conſult its own proper light, and does not compare the Doctrine offered with its Notions. She only compares it with the Rule which God has given her, the Scripture alone according to us, and the Scripture, Tradition and Councils, according to you.

It's not the ſame when the queſtion is to know whether a Religion be Divine; for example, when one deliberates whether one ſhall be a Chriſtian, *Pagan* or *Mahometan*. In this enquiry, Reaſon alone muſt be our guide, and the beſt method it can take, is to examine which of

theſe different Religions which challenges our preference, has the moſt viſible Characters of Divinity; which is it which appears moſt likely to have been revealed from God, and which on the contrary is that which we have cauſe to think is a humane invention.

As to the rejecting of a Doctrine, we have ſeveral different means. If it be not conformable to the Rule, we ought not to receive it, we ought to refuſe believing it with a Divine Faith. If it be contrary to the Rule, we ought to do more, we ought poſitively to reject it, and believe it to be falſe. In a word, if our Senſes or Reaſon expreſly atteſt this Doctrine is not true, we ought to perſwade our ſelves, not only that it is not true, but that it has never been revealed of God.

This laſt duty draws its Original from two different ſprings: The *firſt* is the force of this great Maxim, which is the foundation of Divine Faith, to wit, *That whatever God has ſaid is true.* Hence properly comes the obligation which we have to believe whatever God has revealed to us. In effect, why ſhould we not believe it, ſeeing its equally impoſſible that God ſhou'd be deceiv'd himſelf, judging things to be what they are not, as that he ſhou'd deceive others, by telling them they be not, what he knows they are?

And this is the true foundation of Divine Faith, and the original of that right which our Reaſon has, not to believe what is evidently falſe. Divine Faith does thus Reaſon: *Whatever God has reveal'd is true. God has reveal'd ſuch and ſuch a Doctrine: Then this or that Doctrine is true.* Reaſon ſays for her part: *Whatever God has revealed is true. Such or ſuch a Doctrine is not true: Therefore 'twas not revealed by God.*

Shou'd it happen, as you ſuppoſe, that God ſhou'd reveal a Doctrine which appeared plainly falſe to Reaſon,

we ſhou'd find our ſelves in a dreadful difficulty, or rather in the condition which Divines call a ſtate of *perplexity*, and which wou'd bring along with it, ſhou'd it ever happen, an abſolute impoſſibility of knowing what we ought to do. On one hand, we ſhould be bound to believe this Doctrine, on the ſuppoſition God had reveal'd it; and on the other, we ſhou'd perſwade our ſelves, that God would not have revealed it, becauſe it appears evidently falſe, and conſequently is not to be believed. So that were it only to hinder this from hapning, we ſhou'd believe that God never reveals any thing which is apparently falſe to Reaſon, at leaſt to Reaſon rectifi'd, and which uſes all neceſſary precautions not to be deceiv'd, for 'tis of that alone whereof I ſpeak.

Moreover, were it poſſible for God to reveal a Doctrine evidently falſe, evidence would be no longer the infallible note of Truth; ſeeing in this ſuppoſition the evidence wou'd accompany this act of our Reaſon, which wou'd judg this Doctrine to be falſe, and which wou'd be falſe it ſelf, ſeeing this Doctrine being reveal'd of God, wou'd hereby be neceſſarily true. So that we ought no longer to reckon on the evidence of things; and the Sceptics wou'd have Reaſon to doubt of every thing.

You ſee then, Sir, That this right of our Reaſon has moſt ſolid foundations. And it is certain that it has been ever acknowledged; and that all ſorts of Authors both Ancient and Modern have always believed they might juſtly conclude a Doctrine was not revealed from God, when they ſaw it contrary to the pureſt notices of Reaſon. And thus on one hand the Fathers have done, who wrote againſt the Pagans and Hereticks; and on the other, all Authors of your Communion, who have Treated on the Controverſies which ſeparates us.

For

For as to the *Firſt*, did not *Juſtin Martyr*, *Tertullian*, *Minutius Felix*, *Theophilus* of *Antioch*, *Origen*, *Arnobius*, *Lactantius*, St. *Auguſtin*, St. *Cyril*, and a great many others, oppoſe Paganiſm with the abſurdities and extravagancies of its myſteries? Did not the ſame Fathers writing againſt Hereticks, uſe this very argument; affirming the *Chimera*'s and extravagancies which theſe people believ'd, cou'd in no ſort come from God, being apparently falſe and contrary to all the lights of Reaſon? Have not, in fine, all your Authors who write againſt us, followed the ſame method, tho with different ſucceſs? See *Bellarmin*, *Gregory de Valentia*, *Richlieu*, the Author of Prejudices, and generally all your Controvertiſts. There's not one of them but has pretended to ſhew our Doctrine is not of God, becauſe of the abſurdities therein contained.

All theſe Authors argue on two Principles; The one, That God has revealed nothing which is falſe; The other, That whatever is contrary to Reaſon, is thereby contrary to Truth. Take away which of theſe Principles you will, and all the Arguments of theſe Writers will be meer Sophiſms.

St. *Auguſtin* proceeds farther: He ſays we ought to forſake the Communion of the Orthodox Church, and paſs over into that of the Hereticks, and deſpiſe whatever you reſpect as the foundations of your Faith, cou'd it be made appear, the moſt dangerous Hereticks, ſuch as were then the *Manichees*, taught the Truth *; and this is what he teaches us in this famous paſſage, which your Doctors have ever in their mouths, and wherein he declares that ſeveral things retain him in the boſom of the *Catholick* Church, The conſent of all people, The authority grounded on Miracles, and confirm'd by Antiquity, Succeſſion, and even the name of *Catholick*.

* Aug. cont. Epiſt. fund. cap. 4.

You

You affirm theſe are the props and foundations of the true Faith; and I will not now ſet on ſhewing you the contrary. We may do this another time if you think fitting. At preſent I am willing to ſuppoſe what you ſay. I pray then conſider what Saint *Auguſtin* adds: *Amongſt you*, ſays he, *where I ſee nothing like this, we hear nothing on all hands but promiſes of Truth; and I confeſs*, adds he, *That could you ſhew it me ſo clearly, that I could not doubt of it, I muſt prefer it before whatever withholds me in the Catholick Church.* You ſee here how St. *Auguſtin* acknowledges, That the evidence which excludes doubtings, is to be preferred before the motives of Faith. He does not ſay, that if the *Manichees* had this evidence on their ſide, we ſhou'd deſpiſe it, and offer againſt it the certainty of Faith, as you pretend. He ſays the contrary. He ſays we ſhou'd yield; and that which hinder'd him from doing it, was, That whatever the *Manichees* ſaid, They had not this evidence which they vaunted of; That they promiſed great matters, but cou'd not ſhew them. *Bellarmin* does ſomething like this: * He reckons amongſt the Notes of the Church, the holineſs of its Doctrine; and makes this holineſs conſiſt in her teaching nothing which is falſe, and impoſing nothing which is unjuſt; and will have us judg of this by the lights of Reaſon. He afterwards makes the application of this to the Pagans, *Jews*, *Mahometans*, ancient Hereticks, and laſtly to us. He ſhews as to the firſt, That they have taught things abſurd and abominable; and attempting afterwards to ſhew this on our Subject, he thence concludes, none of theſe Societies is the true Church.

* Bell. de Notis Eccleſ. l. 4. cap. 11.

By this way of diſputing, he plainly ſubjects your Church to this examination, and tacitly implies ſhe may be rejected, provided ſhe can be convinced of all which he

he accuſes the others. For beſides, that he cannot take it ill, That the Infidels and Hereticks ſhould treat him in the ſame manner as he uſes them; beſides this, his greateſt pretenſion is, That the Church muſt be known by *his marks:* ſeeing then one of his marks is, *That ſhe teaches nothing which is falſe*, he hereby conſents to the rejection of your Church, if it can be ſhew'd from Reaſon, That ſhe teaches things falſe and abſurd.

It cannot be deny'd but *Bellarmine* has had ſome Reaſon to deal thus: For 'twou'd certainly be a great ſcandal to the Faithful, and much more to Infidels, cou'd it be clearly and plainly ſhew'd, That Chriſtian Religion teaches things directly contrary to Reaſon. In effect, ſeeing we embrace this Religion only on the account of the proofs which authorize it, and of whoſe goodneſs we cannot judg but by Reaſon, ſhou'd this Reaſon meet with things evidently falſe in this Religion, ſhe wou'd hereby carry us off as far from it, as ſhe cou'd bring us near it, by making us comprehend theſe proofs. Moreover, making two contrary judgments on the ſubject of Religion, the one, That it is true, becauſe the proofs which authorize it are good; the other that it is falſe, becauſe it teaches things abſurd, ſhe muſt of neceſſity be deceived in the one or the other, and ſo neither is certain.

*Art of Thinking, part 4. ch. 11.

The Author of the *Art of Thinking* was not of this mind, ſays Mr. *N. It's certain*, ſays he *, *That Divine Faith ſhould have more force on our minds, than our own Reaſon; and this from Reaſon it ſelf; which ſhews us we ſhould always prefer what is more certain, to what is leſs: It being more certain that what God ſays is true, than what our Reaſon perſwades us, becauſe 'tis more impoſſible God ſhou'd deceive us, than our Reaſon.*

All this, ſaid I, appears to me falſe and ill digeſted, and 'tis eaſie to obſerve herein ſuch a ſlight of hand as ſhews

ſhews little love to truth. To ſee this more diſtinctly, be pleas'd to conſider, That the certainty of every act of Faith depends on the perſwaſion which we have of two Truths, which are in ſome ſort their props and foundations: The *firſt*, That whatever God atteſts, is true: The *ſecond*, That God has atteſted the Doctrine which we believe. You ſee, that if we doubt of either of theſe two Truths, it's impoſſible our Faith can be firm: To what purpoſe is it to know that God does not lye, if we doubt God has not ſaid a thing? And granting he has ſaid ſomething, if we doubt he has ſaid in particular what's propoſed to us to believe. And further, what ſignifies it for us to know, That God has reveal'd what's offer'd us, if we doubt whether all which God ſays, be true?

It's then equally neceſſary to know theſe two Truths, but they be not always equally evident. The *firſt* is ever incomparably more than the *ſecond*. It's always highly evident, That whatever God ſays, is true, and therefore no body differs about it, no not the Athieſts. For tho the Atheiſts hold there's no God, yet they acknowledg if there were one, he would never ſpeak any thing but what is true. But it's commonly far leſs evident, That God has reveal'd what he has in effect reveal'd: Whence it happens men are ſo divided about the things which are pretended to be revealed from God. Yet this Author ſays nothing of this *ſecond* perſwaſion: He ſpeaks only of the *firſt*. He conceals the weak ſide, and ſhews only the ſtrongeſt. *It's certainer*, ſays he, *that what God ſays, is true, than what our Reaſon perſwades us.* Be it ſo. But is it certainer that God has revealed ſuch and ſuch a Doctrine, than 'tis certain one and two are three, and that if I think, I am? This he will not ſay. Yet if he does not ſay it, he muſt acknowledg he has ill reaſoned. For if what Reaſon ſays be more certain, than it's certain God has re-

veal'd the Doctrine of which one is perſwaded, he ſhall have far leſs certainty of the Truth of this Doctrine, than of what Reaſon ſees diſtinctly.

But let us ſtop a while at what this Author has choſen, and which he has made his ſtrong hold. *It's certainer*, ſays he, *That what God ſays is true, than what our Reaſon perſwades us.* He makes Reaſon to ſay this, and conſequently his ſenſe is, that this act of Reaſon which perſwades us, That what God ſays, is true, is more certain, than what our Reaſon perſwades us. But what does he mean? Does he mean that this act is more certain than any act of Reaſon whatever? If this be ſo, he contradicts himſelf. For this very act being an act of Reaſon, if it has more certainty than any act of Reaſon, 'twill be more certain than it ſelf.

Does he mean that this act is the certaineſt of all, and that there's no other which equals the certainty of this? If this be his ſenſe, 'tis eaſie to ſhew him his miſtake: *Firſt*, is this act more certain than that which perſwades us of the exiſtence of God? Let him ſay which he will, he cannot eſcape me. For to what purpoſe is it to know, That *Truth* is eſſential to God, ſuppoſing he exiſts, if it be leſs certain that he does exiſt? If on the contrary, theſe two acts be equally certain, and if the actual exiſtence be as clearly comprehended in the Idea we have of God, as the unqueſtionable truth of what he atteſts; the perſwaſion we have of this *ſecond* Truth, is not the certaineſt of all thoſe perceived by Reaſon, ſeeing the perſwaſion of Gods exiſtence is no leſs certain.

Is it more certain, That whatever God ſays is true, than it's certain, That nothing of what appears to us is falſe? This no man will ſay, ſeeing we judg, neither that God exiſts, nor that whatever he ſays is true, nor that we can affirm of each thing, whatever is contain'd in the

the diſtinct Idea we have of it, but becauſe all this appears evident. So that here we have a third perſwaſion, which is no leſs certain than that which we were to think to be the moſt infallible.

But ſays this Author, *God is more uncapable of deceiving us, than our Reaſon is of being deceived.* I grant it. But how do we know this, but by our Reaſon? and conſequently we have only a certitude of Reaſon, and we are not more certain of it, than that we are certain, That our Reaſon does not deceive us, whether in this, or other things, which be as evident as this.

This little ſubtilty might paſs, did we not fear being miſtaken in matters of Faith, without accuſing even God himſelf of deceiving us. But a man muſt be a fool that has ſuch an irrational thought: When we do doubt of matters of Faith, this doubt does never tend to perſwade us, God has deceiv'd us in revealing to us what is hard to be believ'd, but rather perſwades us we are miſtaken, in taking that for a Divine Revelation, which is only a Doctrine of men. So thoſe who doubt, do never compare the certitude of their Reaſon with the certainty of Gods Teſtimony. Neither have they ever the leaſt temptation to imagin the firſt greater than the ſecond. But they always compare this act of their Reaſon, which has perſwaded them God has revealed to 'em what appears to them incredible, with this other act of their Reaſon, which makes them find incredible what they believ'd God had revealed to them. And therefore we may ceaſe to believe without imagining God has deceiv'd us, or that our Reaſon is more incapable of being deceiv'd, than God of deceiving us. And conſequently from Gods being more incapable of deceiving us, than our Reaſon of being deceiv'd, does in no wiſe follow, That Faith has greater certainty than Reaſon.

Let this Author then pardon me if I ſay, 'Twou'd be a grievous ſcandal to Infidels, were it ſo, That Chriſtian Religion taught things directly contrary to Reaſon, and which ſhou'd appear ſuch, not at firſt ſight, but on mature deliberation, after all poſſible care to prevent being deceived, and after long and ſerious reflexions, which will not at all permit doubtings of the matter's being what it appears.

But it is alſo true, Chriſtian Religion has not a Doctrine, which is in this ſort contrary to the lights of Reaſon; and this cannot be denied without contradicting all your School-Divines. For *firſt*, if it be true, Chriſtianity teaches things contrary to Reaſon, what will become of what Cardinal *Richlieu*, and the *Author* of the *Art of Thinking*, ſay? The firſt affirms (*a*), *That natural light deceives no body*; and the other ſays (*b*), *That things exactly conſider'd; what we ſee evidently, and from Reaſon, or from the faithful report of our Senſes, is never contrary to what is taught us by Divine Faith.*

(*a*) *Richl.* method, Book 1. ch. 1.
(*b*) Art of Thinking, part 4. ch. 11.

What will become of what all your Divines ſay (*c*), That the Myſtery of the Trinity is far above Reaſon, but not contrary to it? Wou'd it not be contrary to Reaſon, if being true, it ſhou'd appear to it evidently falſe?

(*c*) *Vaſq.* in 1. diſp. 123. cap. 1 Valent, Tom. 3. diſp. 1 quæſt. 1 Punct. 4 *Bell.* de Not. Eccleſ. cap. 11. Mærat. de fid. diſp. 16 Sect. 5.

What will you think of what theſe ſame Divines teach after your Angelical Doctor (*d*), That 'tis impoſſible to make Demonſtrations againſt the Truths of Salvation. *As Faith*, ſays he, *is grounded on infallible Truth, and it being impoſſible to ſhew that which is contrary to Truth; ſo it is clear that the proofs made uſe of againſt Faith, are not Demonſtrations, but Objections which are ſolvible.*

(*d*) *Tho. Aqu.* part 1. quæſt. 1. art. 8.

What will become of what paſſes for unqueſtionable in your Schools (*e*)? That one may Demonſtratively

(*e*) Cajet in 1 quæſt. 1 art. 8 Vaſq. in 1 diſp. 11 cap. 2 & 3. Valent. ubi ſeq Conint. de act. ſup. diſp. ii. dub. ii. Rhod. Tom. 1 diſp. 6 quæſt. 1. Sect. 3. Mart. de fid. diſp. 5 Sect. 4.

prove,

prove, not in truth, That the Myſtery of the Trinity, and all the others are true, nor yet whatever is oppoſed againſt them is falſe, but that all the Objections brought againſt them include ſome Propoſition which is not evident, and which conſequently may be deni'd. Is not this to ſay our Reaſon cannot prove demonſtratively the falſity of our Myſteries? Does not this abſolutely overthrow your Objection?

You will have the *Arians* and *Socinians* Objections to paſs for a convincing Demonſtration. Yet your Divines affirm it's impoſſible to make Demonſtrations againſt the Truths of Faith. You ſay 'tis impoſſible to anſwer any thing to this. But your Divines affirm to you, That this Objection, and the reſt like it, do neceſſarily include ſomething which may be deni'd, and is not evident. They paſs further,

They ſay one may demonſtrate this very thing: Which is to ſay, one may demonſtrate, That it is not poſſible to offer Demonſtrations againſt us.

Which is what we may eaſily juſtifie by another conſideration. Which is, to the end an Argument may paſs for Demonſtrative, every term about it muſt be perfectly underſtood, whereby there may ariſe a clear and diſtinct Idea in the mind of what it expreſſeth. And therefore *Geometricians* uſe ſuch clear terms in their Demonſtrations, that it is impoſſible but they muſt be underſtood; or if any one offers it ſelf clouded with the leaſt obſcurity, they immediately carefully explain it. And therefore they make no Demonſtration but what is preceded by a great number of Definitions which explain the terms. But how can this be in a Myſtery ſo little known as that of the Trinity?

For who can pretend to have diſtinct Idea's, either of the Divine Eſſence, and its Unity, or of the Perſons which poſſeſs it, and of their diſtinction? *When*

* *Aug.* de Trin. lib. 5. cap. 9.

When we are askt, says St. *Auguſtin* *, *what the three are, the mind of man finds it ſelf extream ſhallow, and cannot expreſs it ſelf. Yet it is ſaid there are Three Perſons, not as if we cou'd define 'em, but we rather ſay ſo, that we may not ſay nothing.* And in another place *, *When 'tis demanded of us what the Three are, we ſet our ſelves on ſeeking ſome general or particular term, becauſe the excellency of Divine things is beyond the ſtrength of our expreſſions. For there's more truth in what we think, than in what we ſay of God, and more in reality than in thought.* I ſay the ſame thing of other terms uſed on this great Subject. They raiſe in our minds only confuſed and muddy Ideas. How then will theſe afford us Demonſtrations?

* Idem. lib. 7. cap. 4.

What do you anſwer then directly to my Objection? ſays Mr. *N.* What do you your ſelf anſwer? reply'd I. For in fine, conſidering what I have ſaid, you ſee our intereſt is the ſame. In effect it muſt be ſaid we have no rational Argument to offer againſt the *Arians* or *Socinians*. This laſt refuge ſeems to me intollerable, and I ſhou'd as ſoon ſay they have the Reaſon on their ſide, and we are poſſeſs'd with abſurd prejudices.

We muſt then ſay theſe peoples Objections may be ſolidly anſwer'd; and do you think, Sir, none of your Divines, not to ſpeak now of ours, have not done it? Were this the caſe, this truth muſt have been very unfortunate to have met with no Defender, for ſo many ages, able to repel the attacks of its adverſaries? Moreover, I do not ſee how you can extol ſo much as you commonly do, the learning, wiſdom, yea and Infallibility of your Church, ſeeing it ſeems ſhe has nothing but blind Anſwers, and vain Tergiverſations to refute theſe Erroneous perſons Objections.

For my part, I am of a very different opinion, and believe your Schoolmen have ſolidly anſwer'd this Objection.

on. *Firſt*, you know, That ſeveral of 'em have deni'd this Philoſophical Maxim; which implies, That two Subjects cannot be diſtinguiſht from one another, when they are not ſo by a third. You know there are ſeveral conſiderable inſtances offer'd, as is that of length, largeneſs and depth, which are very different from one another, altho they all differ not from extenſion.

Whereunto we may add that of the *Moduſſes*, which are not diſtinct from the things they *modify*, altho diſtinguiſh'd from one another. As for inſtance, when I ſhut my hand, I give it a quite different manner of being, from that it has, when open, and ſtretched out. Of neceſſity theſe two manners of being, muſt be different from one another, ſeeing it's not only eaſie to ſeparate them, and to make 'em ſubſiſt one without another, but it's impoſſible to make 'em ſubſiſt together, being oppoſite and inconſiſtent. Yet 'tis commonly held, That the *Moduſſes* be not really diſtinguiſhable from the things they *modifie*.

I ſay the ſame thing of the actions of the Soul; there are ſome of 'em inconſiſtent. For example, to judg a propoſition is true, and to judg that it's falſe: To will and not to will the ſame Object: To love and hate the ſame perſon. The ſame ſoul does this at ſeveral times. And conſequently does very different acts. Yet theſe acts, tho different from one another, do not really differ from the ſubſtance of the ſoul, but are only mere modifications of it.

One may then deny your Maxim, or reſtrain it, and bring exceptions againſt it. You know your Divines have made ſeveral, and ſhew'd, That either of 'em ſecures the Myſtery before us. I ſuppoſe you do not expect I ſhou'd recite them, ſeeing you may find 'em in Father *Vincent*'s Logick, in *George Rhodes* Theology, and in ſeveral other of your Authors. Were

Were there not any thing in all this which ſatisfy'd me, I ſhou'd not be much perplex'd about it: I ſhou'd content my ſelf with what I now told you, That all the Objections which can be made againſt the Myſtery of the Trinity, conſiſt of ſeveral improper and obſcure terms, and ſuch as are incapable of cauſing diſtinct Idea's of what is pretended to be ſignifi'd by 'em. To ſhew then, That this Doctrine does not include Contradictions, as you wou'd inſinuate by the Objection I examin; conſider the main or bottom of this great Myſtery, what makes for, and againſt it; we ſhou'd conceive in a juſt and preciſe manner what's therein inconſiſtent, and ſee clearly theſe inconſiſtencies and oppoſitions. But we being far from ſuch a knowledg of this great Truth, it's then clear, no one can ſhew it includes any thing contradictory.

But it's not the ſame with *Tranſubſtantiation*. What you ſay of that, includes a great number of palpable and manifeſt Contradictions, and ſhocks directly all the notices of Senſe and Reaſon. So that you cannot make too much haſt to retrench it from the body of Chriſtian Religion, and remove it out of a place which it ſo ill ſupplies.

A body wou'd think, anſwer'd he, to hear you ſpeak, That we might form Chriſtian Religion to our minds, and as ſoon as a Doctrine is not to our fancy, we may put it our of our Creed. This without doubt wou'd be very agreeable. But, Sir, in excluding *Tranſubſtantiation* from the number of the Articles of Faith, will you thereby blot it out of Holy Writ, wherein the Divine Spirit has inſerted it in ſuch clear and full terms? You know Heaven & Earth ſhall ſooner paſs away than the leaſt iota of this holy Word.

Never fear, repli'd I, my blotting it out. It never was there. And this I wou'd now make apparent to you, did I not fear we have walkt and talk'd ſo long, that both your legs and ears are tired.

F I N I S.

63355